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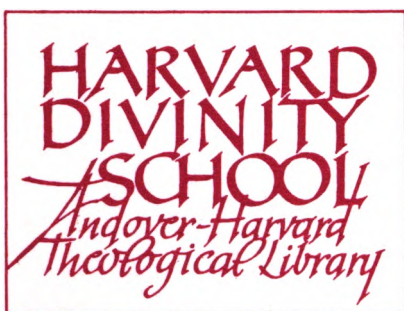
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**ISIS REVELATA, &c.**

Dr. Abercrombie on Med. <sup>p.</sup> xlix.  
Dr. John Barclay, Edinb., author  
of "Life & Organism", p. 25; & etc.  
Physiology.  
Lord Monboddo Spirit. Philos. p. 43.

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# ISIS REVELATA:

An Inquiry

INTO

THE ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE

OF

Animal Magnetism:

BY

J. C. COLQUHOUN, ESQ. ADVOCATE,

F. R. S. E.



SAPIENTIAE ET SANITATI.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH, MACLACHLAN & STEWART  
AND BALDWIN & CRADOCK, LONDON



**ISIS REVELATA :**  
**AN INQUIRY**  
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**THE ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE**  
**OF**  
**ANIMAL MAGNETISM.**

**BY**  
**J. C. COLQUHOUN, Esq. ADVOCATE.**

**THIRD EDITION.**

**WITH A PREFACE, IN WHICH THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCE IS CONTINUED TO  
THE PRESENT TIME.**

*Ingenii commenta delet dies ; naturæ judicia confirmat.—CICERO.*

*Non fingendum, non excogitandum, sed inveniendum et observandum  
quid Natura faciat aut ferat.—BACON.*

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# PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

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It is not without considerable hesitation, and great diffidence, that I venture to submit the following pages to public notice.

The subject is, in a great measure, foreign to my usual avocations, and was originally taken up merely as a matter of curiosity, although it afterwards swelled, in my estimation, into no small importance. Conscious, however, as I necessarily must be, of my own great deficiency in the requisite knowledge of those sciences which are most calculated to elucidate the particular object of my present researches, I have long felt an anxious desire that some individual, better qualified by his professional pursuits, and in every other respect more competent, had been induced to undertake the task which has now devolved on me. But see-

ing no immediate prospect of the fulfilment of this hope, and having been frequently applied to, both by professional gentlemen and others, for information, I have, at length, felt myself almost compelled to exhibit a concise view of the progress which has hitherto been made towards the elucidation of this obscure but most interesting subject; for the reader will soon perceive, that this could not have been satisfactorily accomplished in mere casual and interrupted conversation. Indeed, it is almost impossible for any one to comprehend a great many particulars, which it is yet necessary not to overlook, without having either himself carefully made experiments, or witnessed—at least attentively studied—those made by others.

Fortunately, the kindness of a most respected friend, whose active and enlightened mind is constantly alive to the interests of literature and science, has recently supplied me with an admirable opportunity of introducing the subject to the notice of the British public, by communicating to me the late Report of the Magnetic Experiments made by a Committee of the Medical Section of the Royal Academy of France. I felt that I had now nothing more to do, than to lay this important document before my countrymen, accompanied by such an historical and explanatory introduction, as might enable those, who had not

hitherto paid any attention to the subject, to comprehend its details.\*

This subject ought to be peculiarly interesting to the medical profession, as well as to the philosopher in general. If the vast variety of facts, which have been gradually accumulating during the last half century, can be considered as satisfactorily substantiated, the force of the evidence in favour of *Animal Magnetism*—or by whatever other name we may choose to distinguish that peculiar species of sympathetic influence which has long been so called—becomes absolutely irresistible. And if these facts be true, and not entirely supposititious and delusive, it cannot be denied that they are calculated to open up many new and most important views in medical and physiological science—indeed, in the whole philosophy of the human mind.

Ever since the time of that singular compound of genius and folly, Paracelsus, physicians in general seem to have been in the habit of relying too exclusively upon the efficacy of the chemical remedies, to the almost entire neglect of many simple and natural, though equally efficacious, sanative processes, especially those powerful psychical in-

\* This Report, so far as I am aware, has not been published in France. A determinate number of copies, however, were lithographed for the use of the members of the Academy; and from one of these the translation has been made.



fluences, which appear to have been known and employed in ancient times, and which are developed with such prodigious effect, in the magnetic treatment. Thus, for example, in cases of epilepsy and other spasmodic diseases, the regular practitioner would perhaps prescribe the internal administration of lunar caustic, ammoniate of copper, or some other dangerous drug; whereas, the magnetic doctor would cure the patient as speedily, as effectually, and probably more safely, by means of a few simple, and apparently insignificant manipulations. This is a circumstance which surely deserves the serious attention of the profession; the more especially, as, should it still continue to be neglected by the regular physician, the treatment runs the risk of being unskilfully practised, and probably abused, by the empiric.\*

This country has produced many eminent physicians, distinguished for their learning, their talents, and their liberality.† Of late, however, our medical men seem liable to the reproach of having

\* This truth was fully exemplified during the earlier practice of *Animal Magnetism* in France.

“Eadem namque subjecti subtilitas et varietas, quæ magnam medendi facultatem præbet, sic etiam magnam aberrandi facilitatem.”—BACON.

† I trust, however, that we have no reason, in our days, to say with Hippocrates, *Medici fama quidem et nomine multi, re autem et opere valde pauci.*

almost entirely neglected the most important labours of their professional brethren upon the Continent. The interesting and instructive works of Sprengel, Reil, Treviranus, Gmelin, Wienholt, Autenrieth, and many others, are known only to a few ; and when any mention happens to be made of the subject of *Animal Magnetism*, it is at best received with an ignorant ridicule, or with a supercilious reference to the superseded report of the French Commissioners in 1784 ; as if nothing had been done, since that period, towards a more profound experimental investigation and improvement of the magnetic treatment.

But it is evident that our physicians cannot long remain ignorant of these matters, without falling greatly behind the age in respect to professional acquirements. To them, therefore, I would respectfully, but earnestly, recommend a scientific and impartial inquiry into the subject. They are unquestionably the most competent to the investigation, the most interested in its result, and the best qualified to render the discovery—provided they shall be ultimately satisfied that it really is a discovery—most conducive to the interests of science, and to the public welfare. At all events, they ought no longer to betray utter ignorance upon a subject which has long been handled in almost every physiological text-book upon the Continent.

Within the limits which I had prescribed to myself in this publication, it was found quite impossible fully to elucidate all the details of this interesting subject. This would have required, at the least, a large volume. All that I proposed to myself, therefore, at this time, was merely to give such an introductory notice of this discovery, as might prepare the reader, in some degree, for a more serious study of its nature and principles, and of the evidence by which its reality is supported. Should the present trivial publication attract any remarkable share of attention, additional information can easily be communicated hereafter.

EDINBURGH,  
15th April 1833.

## PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

---

WHEN the First Edition of this Inquiry was published, I was perfectly aware of the gross ignorance that prevailed, in this country, upon the subject of its contents, and of the prejudices I should probably encounter, and the ridicule to which I might expose myself, in attempting to recommend it to the serious notice of philosophers. Having occasionally bestowed a good deal of attention upon Animal Magnetism, however, during a period of more than twenty years; having carefully investigated its origin and progress, perused all the most important works which treated of its principles, explained its practice, and established the reality of its operation; and, moreover, having made a few successful experiments in order to satisfy

myself with regard to the truth of the facts and the alleged efficacy of the processes; I felt myself, in some measure, qualified to communicate to others an adequate portion of information upon this interesting but neglected subject. Accordingly, I had long determined to publish a short account of the discovery, provided I found a favourable opportunity, and was not anticipated by any other more competent individual. My object, I thought, would be amply attained, if I should only succeed in attracting public attention, and in exciting a spirit of investigation in more influential quarters. Perhaps the very circumstances that, as an individual, I was altogether unconnected with the medical profession, and otherwise unattached to any particular philosophical sect, and, consequently, could have no conceivable interest in the establishment or refutation of the statements to be made or the doctrines to be propounded, might operate as an assurance that I should divest myself of all scientific prejudices, and treat the subject as an honest and zealous, although an humble, inquirer after truth. Indeed, I had no philosophical theory to recommend to the favourable notice of the public; my sole object was to solicit their earnest and unbiassed attention to a class of very curious but hitherto much neglected facts, which I deemed of more than ordinary importance, and of the truth

of which every competent inquirer might satisfy himself, as I had done, by study and experiment.

But, notwithstanding the apparent simplicity of my project, I could not avoid feeling that, in carrying my determination into effect, I should have many serious difficulties and disadvantages to contend with. The subject—at least in its scientific relations—was new in this country, and almost, if not entirely unknown to the great majority of those to whom I should have to address myself: and, besides, so far as causes are concerned, it was by no means of easy explanation. Probably few, if any men of scientific pursuits, in this kingdom, were prepared for a serious investigation of the details to be submitted to their judgment. The terms, too, by which the doctrine has hitherto been designated, savoured of mysticism, with which, indeed, it had been generally—at one time, perhaps, not altogether unjustly—associated; while the very extraordinary character of the facts to be adduced must almost necessarily have caused them to be viewed with the utmost suspicion and scepticism, at least, if not treated with absolute ridicule. From the gentlemen of the medical profession, whose opinion would naturally have much weight with the inexperienced public, I had, for obvious reasons, nothing to hope, but, at the utmost, an armed neutrality; although it was principally in a deficient

knowledge of the technical lore peculiar to their craft, that I felt my own weakness and want of support.\* The celebrated Report of the French Academicians, in 1784—to which I shall have occasion to advert hereafter—had nearly banished Animal Magnetism from the territory of science, consigned it to the realms of imagination and delusion, and presented formidable obstacles to its restoration, by erecting a strong barrier of preju-

\* This neutrality, so far as I am aware, has been pretty strictly observed, and I may even venture to confess my obligations for the polite attention I have experienced from several of the junior, and consequently most unprejudiced and most inquisitive, members of the profession. I cannot help expressing some surprise, however, that the subject should have been viewed by medical men, in general, with such an apparently listless and apathetic indifference. Upon due inquiry (and this is all I ask for), they would find a number of very extraordinary and highly interesting facts, adduced upon the most incontrovertible evidence, to which sufficient attention has not been hitherto paid. These facts are most important to medical science, and ought to be seriously investigated. To this investigation they ought to be the most competent; and by neglecting it, they just leave a wide door open to quackery, besides depriving themselves of additional means of being useful to society, and, by abandoning the scientific study of their profession, becoming little better than mere empirics.

I must embrace this opportunity of returning my grateful thanks to the gentlemen connected with the medical periodical press, for the candour and courtesy with which they treated my former hasty and very imperfect production, and for the indulgence they shewed towards the many errors into which my ignorance of their science must necessarily have betrayed me.—  
*Veniam petimus damusque vicissim.*

dice against all further inquiry. Any attempt, subsequently made, to re-introduce the subject to public notice, must have been regarded as implying a preference of private investigation and individual judgment, to the apparently solemn, deliberate and authoritative decision of a celebrated scientific body. Besides, the names of the greater number of these individuals—however respectable or distinguished among their own fellow-citizens—who had made Animal Magnetism the object of their researches upon the Continent, and given their countenance to that mode of treatment as a sanative process, were almost entirely unknown in this country, and, consequently, could have carried little weight along with them, if authority only were to be depended upon.

In more recent times, however,—fortunately for my projected undertaking,—a Committee consisting of some of the most distinguished members of one of those scientific societies, which had formerly pronounced a judgment so apparently unfavourable in this interesting matter—the Royal Academy of Medicine at Paris—have framed a new Report upon the subject, founded upon numerous experiments, which may be fairly considered as having now superseded the former Report of the Commissioners appointed in 1784, and thus placed Animal Magnetism upon a footing of respectability, by



conferring upon its study, at length, the sanction of that learned body. While the original Commissioners had formerly—in the very infancy of the inquiry—in the days of comparative ignorance—prematurely condemned the doctrine and practice of Animal Magnetism as delusive and dangerous; a recent Committee of competent persons, appointed from among their own body by one of the most learned scientific societies in Europe, have now, with far more ample and more mature knowledge of the subject, with an infinitely larger body of evidence before them, and with a praiseworthy zeal tempered with a truly philosophical caution, re-investigated the facts, reviewed the question, and found reason to reverse the hasty and inconsiderate sentence of their predecessors.\*

It is curious, and by no means uninteresting, to

\* Dr Bertrand states it as an important fact, that, in the discussions which preceded the recent investigation and Report by the Royal Academy of Medicine, there was scarcely one member who opposed the proposition for a new examination, who did not, at the same time, admit *that magnetism exerts a real action on the animal economy*. This affords one instance among many of the irrational inconsistency of some of the opponents of Animal Magnetism. They pretend to admit the existence of the agent, while they obstinately refuse to investigate the reality of the phenomena by which alone its efficacy can be demonstrated.

*Nonnulli, tædio veritatis investigandæ, cuiilibet opinioni potius ignavi succumbunt, quam explorandâ veritate pertinaci diligentia perseverare volunt.*—MINUT. FELIX.

observe the different reception which these two reports respectively met with in the scientific world. The former, with all its numerous faults, imperfections, inconsistencies, and contradictions on its head, was, at once, almost universally hailed, by the professional physician and the philosopher, with the highest satisfaction and applause, as conclusive with regard to the reality, the merit, and the utility of an alleged important discovery, which had begun to disturb the calmness of their scientific repose. The latter has been viewed with suspicion and distrust, and treated with censure, contumely and ridicule, because it has opened up an obnoxious but highly interesting discussion; although this last Committee, carefully avoiding the controversial example of their predecessors, have merely laid before their brethren the result of their own experiments and observations, without one word of argument, or a single allusion to theory. This affords one instance, among many, of the extreme reluctance which is felt by philosophers to allow their partial convictions to be unsettled by new lights, and of the great difficulty of procuring a favourable reception for doctrines which are objectionable only because they are deemed to be incompatible with preconceived notions.

Were we even to go the length of holding that these two apparently conflicting Reports neutra-

lised each other—which, however, would be unfair, considering the very different situation and opportunities of the two Commissions, as well as the spirit by which they seem to have been respectively actuated—we should still be left in possession of the whole of the facts elicited by both Committees, together with all the other overwhelming evidence brought out by the numerous investigations of many competent and credible individual inquirers, in support of the reality of Animal Magnetism. Indeed, the last Report of the French Academicians contains but an inconsiderable fragment of the evidence in the case. So true is this, that even were the Report in question—however valuable as an auxiliary, as expressing the decided conviction, after the most anxious, the most ample, the most able and deliberate inquiry, of some of the most eminent scientific physicians in Europe—were this Report, I say, at this moment annihilated and forgotten, the most important facts which it recognises could, nevertheless, be established, in the most satisfactory manner, by evidence altogether independent of it, as I trust I shall be enabled to shew in the sequel. Nay, in this document, some of the most remarkable phenomena which occasionally occur in the magnetic practice, as will be seen hereafter, are scarcely even adverted to. In one point of view, at least, this last Report

unquestionably possesses a decided superiority over the former. It is limited to the facts alone which fell under the observation of the reporters, and cautiously avoids all doubtful, perplexing, and unsatisfactory theories.\*

I am quite aware that a great many of the facts to which I shall have occasion to solicit the attention of the reader, especially when I come to treat

\* Those ingenious persons who vainly imagine that they have demolished Animal Magnetism, when they have merely uttered some foolish quibbles, jokes, or invectives against the last Report of the French Academicians, ought to be made aware that they have not attempted, far less accomplished, one thousandth part of their necessary labours. They must proceed to examine and refute the voluminous works of Doctors Wienholt, Olbers (the astronomer), Treviranus, Heinecken, Gmelin, Brandis, Passavant, Kluge, Ennemoser, Ziermann, &c. ; of Professors Kieser, Eschenmayer, Nasse, Nees von Esenbeck, &c. ; of MM. de Puysegur, Tardy de Montravel, Deleuze, de Lausanne, Roullier, Chardel, Fillassier, &c. They must invalidate the whole facts brought forward in these works, and in the various periodical and other publications which have appeared upon this subject, and prove that their authors were and are fools or knaves and liars ; for all of them speak of what they assert to have witnessed. Moreover, they must refute Nature herself, and demonstrate that, according to all the known principles of science, she is an arrant quack and impostor, and utterly unworthy of the slightest degree of credit, when she pretends to act in opposition to established notions. In attempting this arduous and very laudable task, I may admire their boldness, but cannot promise them success. Yet until they have done all this, they must not be allowed to boast of having refuted Animal Magnetism.

of the higher phenomena of Animal Magnetism, are of a very extraordinary character—upon the first view, perhaps, altogether incredible; such, in short, as

“ May gratify our curiosity,

“ But ought not to necessitate belief.”

The evidence adduced in support of the reality of these facts, I freely admit, must be thoroughly sifted, and carefully examined, and accurately weighed—must be ascertained to be of the most ample, the most unsuspecting, the most cogent and irresistible nature—before their existence can be generally admitted. But a rational, a philosophical scepticism can be allowed to go no farther than this, however extraordinary, however incomprehensible the facts themselves may appear to be. That an individual, for example, in certain circumstances, in a peculiar state of the organism, should be able to see, or, at least, should appear to us to exercise the faculty of vision, at the pit of the stomach, the palms of the hands, or the points of the fingers, is, no doubt, most extraordinary, quite inconsistent with common experience, and incompatible with the principles of all established science—some, perhaps, will exclaim, Marvellous! impossible!\*

\* Voici leur jargon : Cela est faux, impossible, absurde ! Eh ! combien y a t-il de choses lesquelles, pour un temps, nous avons rejetées avec risées comme impossibles, que nous avons été contraints d'avouer après, et encore passer outre à d'autres plus

But the phenomenon, when its reality has once been established, and its conditions ascertained, by satisfactory and irrefragable evidence—when once we are assured that it is a positive natural fact—the phenomenon, I say, however extraordinary and remote from common experience it may be, is no more miraculous or incredible, than that the same individual, in different circumstances, in the ordinary state of the organism, should see with his eyes. We are too apt to judge of the reality of things by their more familiar external appearances, and, forgetting the first aphorism of Lord Bacon, to expect that Nature will always accommodate her operations to our preconceived notions of possibility, and adapt her phenomena to our arbitrary systems of philosophy. In a certain sense, indeed, universal nature may be said to constitute one grand and incomprehensible miracle of Divine Power. In our present ordinary state of existence, we are permitted to see only “as through a glass—darkly.” We are yet confessedly ignorant of many of the powers and processes of nature, as well as of the causes to which they are to be ascribed. We are, therefore, not entitled to prescribe limits to her operations, and to say to her, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther*. We must not presume to assign bounds to the exercise étranges. Et, au rebours, combien d'autres nous ont été comme articles de foi, et puis vains mensonges !—CHARRON, *De la Sagesse*. Liv. I.

of the power of the Almighty; nor are these operations and that power to be controlled by the arbitrary theories and capricious fancies of man. To borrow the language of an old and eloquent English author, "The ways of God in nature, as in providence, are not as our ways: Nor are the models that we frame any way commensurate to the vastness, profundity, and unsearchableness of His works, which have a depth in them greater than the well of Democritus."\*

In this *age of intellect*, it seems, we have become much too enlightened to believe in miracles, and yet we are constantly surrounded by miracles; for, essentially, every thing in nature is a miracle. The human eye, with its power of vision, which is placed in intimate and immediate connexion with the soul, is a miracle; and so of the other senses. The motion of the muscles at the command of the will is a most astonishing and incomprehensible miracle. The regular return of the seasons, the fertility of the earth, the origin and nature of man, the millions of worlds around us, and their unvaried revolutions, the principle of gravitation, the phenomena of electro-magnetism, &c.—all these things are miracles, which do not owe their existence and preservation to themselves, but depend upon determined laws assigned them by that great, omni-

\* Joseph Glanvill.

scient, and omnipotent Being by whom they were originally created. But because they are universal and continually recurring, they no longer appear to us as miracles; all this has become so natural to us, that we conclude it could not have been otherwise than it is. But do these miracles, which pervade all nature, cease to be miracles, because they are common to all existence? They are still miracles, only subject to certain laws which are generally recognised. Hence it comes, that we only consider as a miracle whatever appears to us to deviate from these general laws, and does not seem to coincide with the other common phenomena. For instance, were the exalted psychical powers of some individuals, such as the *clairvoyance* of somnambulists, a property common to all men in general, nobody would consider it as miraculous, but as an endowment conferred by nature upon all mankind. Exceptions, deviations from a general rule, however, are disputed and denied, unless they become as obvious to the senses as the influence of the magnet, which we recognise when it attracts iron, although we do not comprehend its cause. Nature supplies us with facts, and of these men form theories and systems by means of a more or less perfect process of generalization. But, unfortunately, in the course of time, these theories are permitted to supersede nature, our systems are



completed, and thenceforward we become obstinately indisposed to admit the reality of any fact, however clearly demonstrated, which does not fall within our established general laws.

We know a number of instances in which wounds and diseases have been cured by sympathy; but many persons, who are sceptics in regard to all other super-sensible phenomena, do not hesitate to deny all such effects of sympathy, of which they have not been witnesses, or which they have not themselves experienced. Others have had a presentiment of certain events which has been subsequently verified in the most wonderful manner. These persons profess their belief in such presentiments, but reject the influence of sympathy, the *clairvoyance* of somnambulists, and other extraordinary phenomena. But if the one be true, the others are, at least, possible; and experience must determine the reality of both. Now, the reality of the extraordinary phenomena alluded to, as shall hereafter be shewn, has been demonstrated by such satisfactory evidence as must put even the most obstinate scepticism to silence; and the most learned and enlightened physicians, who have condescended to investigate the subject impartially, no longer attempt to deny facts which either they themselves, or others, have frequently witnessed, and which incontrovertibly prove that there are

hidden powers in the human constitution, which are capable of being developed on particular occasions, and under favourable circumstances, and which the ignorant then gaze upon as miracles.\*

It has hitherto been too much the custom with all the zealous partizans and apostles of new doctrines and systems of science, however suspicious or fanciful, to make a clamorous and impatient, and often very unreasonable, appeal to the faith or credulity of the public. I have too high an opinion of the candour of my readers, and too much respect for their intelligence, to make any such appeal upon the present occasion. Firm, indeed, as is my own individual conviction of the reality and importance of the facts I am about to submit to the consideration of the public, I do not now, I never did, and never shall, call upon any one to profess his belief in them :—

“ Let me be censur'd by th' austerest brow,  
Where I want art or judgment, tax me freely :  
Let envious censors, with their broadest eyes,  
Look through and through me. I pursue no favour ;  
*Only vouchsafe me your attention.*”†

I merely solicit the patient attention of the honest and unprejudiced inquirer, and humbly invite him to read, and reason, and investigate, and request

\* See some striking observations upon this subject in a work by Professor W. Stilling, entitled : *Der Zusammenhang der Seele mit der Geisterwelt.* Ludwigsburg, 1834.

† Ben Jonson.

that he will believe nothing but upon the most cogent evidence of its truth. Conviction, when ultimately obtained in this way, will be less apt to be mingled with error—will be more valuable in itself, more powerful and more permanent. Let it be remembered that I am not going to open up any new views of religious faith, nor even to expound any new system of human science. I am merely about to lay before the public a class of very interesting natural facts, which, although many of them have been occasionally observed during thousands of years, have hitherto been too much disregarded by philosophers, and, consequently, still await a satisfactory elucidation. Should I have occasion to bring forward any theoretical or speculative notions upon this subject, it will only be for the purpose of exhibiting the analogy that exists between these facts and other known phenomena of nature, or of shewing how ingenious men have attempted to explain things which to many appear to be perfectly anomalous and inexplicable. I trust, however, that the intelligent reader will carefully distinguish between theory and fact, and beware of permitting the former to withdraw his attention from the latter. It was by vigorously attacking the theories of the first magnetizers, and denying or suppressing the facts, or keeping them in the back ground, or misrepresenting and subjecting

them to ridicule, that the adversaries of Animal Magnetism on the Continent so long succeeded in their opposition to that doctrine, in the face of daily experience; and as it is extremely probable that the same disingenuous mode of hostility may be attempted upon its first introduction into this country, we should be cautious of allowing ourselves to lose sight of the facts, when we have once become satisfied of their reality.

The great book of Nature lies open and accessible to all. Some individuals may be more, while others are less, capable of decyphering the characters in which it is written, and of comprehending, and duly appreciating, the truths it reveals. But if we would peruse it with advantage, we must prepare ourselves for the study, by previously shaking off all prepossession. Some, perhaps, have the misfortune to be naturally blind; but the proverb truly teaches us, that there are none so blind as those who *will* not see.\* The scepticism of

\* *Certe et labor irritus et nullus effectus, offerre lumen caeco, sermonem surdo, sapientiam bruto.*—ST CYPRIAN.

“ It often happens, however, that an object is not seen, from not knowing how to see it, rather than from any defect in the organ of vision. Mr Babbage has given a striking illustration of this fact. Conversing with Sir John Herschel on the dark lines observed in the solar spectrum by Fraunhofer, he inquired whether Mr Babbage had seen them; and on his replying in the negative, Sir John Herschel mentioned the extreme difficulty he had had, even with Fraunhofer's description in his hand, and the long time which it had cost him in detecting

science, which bath certainly rid us of many errors, sometimes repels, with too much contempt, the investigation of phenomena which it deems impossible, or inconsistent with some preconceived system. But this pre-occupation of the mind is incompatible with the enlarged study of nature; and there are no prejudices so difficult to eradicate, and, at the same time, so detrimental to the real progress of useful knowledge, as the prejudices of self-satisfied and exclusive science.

Although, at this time of day, it may appear to those conversant with the subject to be something like a work of supererogation to attempt to answer, at any great length, the objections formerly urged by ignorance and prejudice against the magnetic treatment; yet it may be proper to take some short notice of the most prevalent; the more especially as they may happen to be revived in this country by persons who are not aware that they have been already repeatedly and most effectually refuted.

them: He then added, 'I will prepare the apparatus, and put you in such a position that they shall be visible, and yet you shall look for them and not find them: after which, while you remain in the same position, I will instruct you *how to see them*, and you shall see them, and not merely wonder you did not see them before, but you shall find it impossible to look upon the spectrum without seeing them.' On looking as he was directed, notwithstanding the previous warning, Mr Babbage did *not* see them; and, after some time, he inquired how they might be seen, when the prediction of Sir John Herschel was completely fulfilled."—THOMAS MARTIN, *Character of Lord Bacon, &c.*

In the first place, then, it was once loudly asserted by many, and is still faintly repeated by a few, that Animal Magnetism is altogether a system of mere quackery and delusion. This objection—which might, perhaps, have some plausibility during the infancy of the discovery—has now become utterly ludicrous, and betrays either consummate ignorance of the subject, or gross dishonesty. For in this assertion it is implied that hundreds of learned, intelligent and eminent individuals—physicians, philosophers and others—in various parts of Europe and at different periods of time, many of them without any personal knowledge of each other, and having no immediate communication, had actually conspired together for the purpose of palming a paltry piece of deception upon the scientific world; and that, with this sole object in view, they had wantonly sacrificed, not their time and talents only, but their character, their respectability and their honour; and all this without the slightest prospect of advantage to themselves, for hitherto, it is believed, the practice of Animal Magnetism has been by no means a profitable occupation. And this calumny, be it remembered, is uttered against such men as the Doctors Wienholt,\*

\* Wienholt, in conjunction with his colleague Dr Olbers the celebrated astronomer, successfully employed the magnetic treatment in a variety of cases where all the ordinary resources

Olbers, Gmelin, Heinecken, Treviranus, Hufeland, Brandis, Kluge, Passavant, Ennemoser, &c. ; the Professors Sprengel, Kieser, Eschenmayer, Nasse, &c.—M. Tardy de Montravel, the Marquis de Puysegur, M. Deleuze, M. de Lausanne, M. Chardel, the Russian Count Panin, Baron de Strombeck, the nine eminent physicians who subscribed the recent Report of the French Royal Academy of Medicine, and hundreds of other intelligent individuals of the most undoubted respectability. Indeed, considering the many accomplished professional gentlemen who have countenanced this method of practice, the mere mooted of such an objection as this implies a degree of scepticism which is utterly ludicrous and absurd. Upon what evidence, I would ask, are we to be permitted to believe any series of facts? What amount of proof is required to justify the general introduction of any new medicine or mode of treatment? If Ani-

of the medical art had entirely failed to produce any beneficial effect. The results of this practice were published in four volumes, which I would earnestly recommend to the attention of the student of Animal Magnetism. All the other eminent individuals above mentioned have recorded their faith in the salutary effects of the magnetic processes, and in the reality of the most remarkable phenomena; most of them have written scientific or practical works upon the subject, and those still living, and belonging to the medical profession, are, I believe, in the constant habit of employing a mode of treatment, the efficacy of which has been fully demonstrated by experience.

mal Magnetism be an imposture, where shall we look for reality ?

That quackery may be exhibited here, as in the regular medical profession, it would be absurd to deny. Yet we have never heard physicians urge this circumstance as an objection to the practice of their art. And supposing that cases occasionally do occur in which imposture is active, and the phenomena are feigned ;—an hundred such cases could not affect the truth of the facts really manifested, and attested by competent and credible witnesses. There might be a thousand false sovereigns in circulation ; but he would be rather a strange logician who should attempt to prove from thence that there is no such thing as a genuine coin of that denomination. Because there are many quacks, is there no such thing in nature as an honest and skilful physician ? Because rogues abound, are there no honest men ? This, indeed, is rather a singular argument in the mouth of a medical man, especially when we reflect that by far the greater number of the phenomena of Animal Magnetism have been elicited by the investigation of regular graduates, and rest upon medical evidence. Moreover, if medicine be not altogether a system of quackery, the very circumstance that the magnetic practice may give occasion to the exercise of quackery and deception, is one of the very best reasons why honest



and respectable professional men should endeavour to wrest it out of the hands of the empiric, and take it under their own protection.

In the second place, it has been urged as an objection against the practice of Animal Magnetism, that it is uncertain in its operation. But it is illogical to conclude that, because the magnetic treatment does not invariably produce the desired effect, it is therefore altogether inoperative and useless. Certain unknown, perhaps accidental, circumstances may counteract its usual efficacy in particular instances; indeed, several of these circumstances have been already discovered and made known, and others may be detected upon farther experience. The same thing, however, it may be observed, sometimes occurs in the ordinary medical practice. The prescribed medicines do not, upon every occasion, operate in the precise manner expected by the physician; yet, from this circumstance, no sane person would attempt to demonstrate the total inutility of medicine. A thousand unprolific marriages take place; yet, upon the strength of this fact, no one would be foolish enough to deny that the multiplication of mankind is brought about by the union of the sexes. An hundred unsuccessful experiments cannot redargue the evidence of established facts. A million of blind persons will never prove that the natural healthy eye is sightless.

It is quite certain that the magnetic treatment has been successfully employed in many instances where the ordinary resources of medical skill had entirely failed to produce any beneficial effect; and in some cases it is considered as nearly a specific.

In the third place, it has been alleged, and upon apparently high authority, that the practice of Animal Magnetism is dangerous. Now, if by this allegation it is meant that the administration of this remedy by unskilful persons, and in improper circumstances, may be attended with dangerous consequences, the objection must be admitted. But here, again, the objection equally applies to the ordinary medical practice. May not the same thing be said of the imprudent administration of opium, of arsenic, of foxglove, of mercury, or of any other medicinal drug? Nay, is it not equally applicable to the unskilful use of surgical instruments? The best medicines, it has been said, and probably with reason, are poisons in the hands of the imprudent; whereas, the strongest poisons are medicines, when cautiously administered by the experienced physician. Besides, it is implied in this objection, that the treatment in question does produce some effects; and this admission, on the part of its most strenuous opponents, is exceedingly valuable. In short, this objection is wholly founded upon the argument *ab abusu ad usum*—from the

abuse to the use of any article whatever; and it has therefore no force when directed against **Animal Magnetism** in particular. But it affords another powerful reason for taking the practice out of the hands of the empiric, and confiding it entirely to the intelligent and skilful physician.

Fire and water are dangerous and destructive elements; but would we banish them entirely from the universe, lest we should be burnt or drowned? The elements of the unceasing activity of nature will continue to exist, whatever short-sighted mortals, in their spurious wisdom, may be pleased to determine in regard to them. Let us study the properties, the relations, the powers of these tremendous elements; and so shall we best learn to use them with advantage, and to protect ourselves from their injurious effects.

Objections, such as I have now briefly noticed, were, for a considerable period, urged against the practice of **Animal Magnetism** upon the Continent, and perhaps with some shew of reason, so long as it was exercised principally by unprofessional, ignorant, and, it may be, unprincipled persons, and intimately associated with absurd mystical theories. But the circumstances are now entirely changed. The mind of every competent and conscientious inquirer was at length completely overwhelmed by the irresistible force of the evidence of the facts

accumulated by experience ; a number of eminent physicians adopted and improved the treatment, and subjected the phenomena to a more scientific investigation ; the doctrine assumed a more philosophical form ; and the objections alluded to, having now become utterly ludicrous and contemptible when viewed in opposition to the facts, were ultimately abandoned by every enlightened antagonist of the system. So far as I am aware, there is now, upon the Continent, no longer any question regarding the reality of Animal Magnetism as a fact, at least among those who have thoroughly investigated the subject, and of such alone I speak ; that question has been completely set at rest by a vast multitude of well-conducted and decisive experiments ; the only points still controverted relate to the causes to which the effects ought to be ascribed, and to the efficacy and utility of the treatment ;— in short, the question is now reduced to one of theory alone, and here, it must be confessed, there is much scope for speculation.

That one human being, in certain circumstances, and under certain conditions, is capable of producing a very perceptible, and, in some instances, a most remarkable effect upon the organism of another, by the exertion of some hitherto unknown, and consequently inexplicable influences, either

physical or psychical, or both combined—for this has not been precisely ascertained—has been frequently asserted as a fact, in ancient and in modern times. Many instances of it are upon record; and this fact, upon whatever principles it may ultimately be found to depend, has now been established beyond the possibility of rational doubt, by the result of the processes of Animal Magnetism: (It is a fact, however, which has probably been believed by many without sufficient inquiry, and certainly rejected by others without any adequate or satisfactory investigation. The apparent mystery which envelopes the subject is well calculated to feed credulity in some, and to generate scepticism in others;—in either case erecting a barrier against all sober and scientific inquiry. The only persons who are entitled to have an authoritative voice in the decision of a question of this nature, are either such as have themselves made an adequate experimental investigation, or such as have carefully studied the subject, and impartially weighed the whole evidence. From such competent judges, Animal Magnetism has nothing to apprehend. The phenomena alleged to have resulted from the magnetic practice are either true, or some hundreds of enlightened and respectable individuals, otherwise of unimpeachable veracity, have, in this instance, been guilty of the most

daring and unparalleled effrontery—of the most wanton, gratuitous, and abominable falsehood; while many thousands of sober and sensible men, most of them originally sceptical in regard to the facts, have permitted themselves to be imposed upon by the grossest delusion; and this, too, in cases where deception appears to have been impossible, or, if possible, could be productive of no imaginable advantage, and was, besides, of easy detection. Moreover, almost every individual may have an opportunity of verifying these phenomena, for his own particular satisfaction, by complying with the requisite conditions. In short, an obstinate denial of the reality of these facts, in the face of all the evidence, is not only irrational in itself, but would annihilate the grounds of all philosophical belief, and tear up all science by the roots.

There is one particular method of treating novel facts, which appear hostile to established theories or systems of science, to which I would briefly call the attention of the reader, although it is perhaps the most dangerous of any, because apparently the most rational, and certainly the most plausible of all. I think it right, indeed, to put the honest inquirer upon his guard against all those specious and sophistical practices, which tend to perpetuate ignorance and error, and to prevent or retard the advancement of truth. The method to which I

now allude, is that by which a clever but disingenuous writer, with a very superficial knowledge, or no knowledge at all, of a particular subject, resting upon principles generally conceived to have been already sufficiently established, combines his powers of wit and ridicule, with every species of tortuous sophistry, and brings the whole battery to bear against doctrines which he deems incompatible with received notions. He feels his advantage in combating new opinions, and arguing on the side of the many against the few. His object is victory, not truth; and he knows that the more he can perplex and darken the subject, the better chance he has to profit by the obscurity. He is quite an adept in the art of distorting facts, and perverting arguments, of making a false application of known principles, and of contriving to throw an air of ridicule over the most serious subjects. Never was the Sphynx more captious in her enigmas, than such an antagonist in his propositions. He knows how to give them a form which may impose upon the soundest logic. He himself contrives to assume the appearance of a good logician: he attacks with vigour—he evades with address; and when arguments fail him, he has recourse to wit. From a consequence which is just, and which he places in the strongest and fairest light, he passes to a number of other con-

clusions, which are utterly false, but which he knows how to clothe in the same colours with the first. By means of this disguise, they pass current in the train, like well counterfeited coin, and are believed to be of the same nature, and of the same value. When hard pressed by unanswerable arguments, he squirts out a profuse quantity of inky matter around him, and, like the cuttle-fish, makes his escape amidst the obscurity. Sometimes, too, a vigorous sarcasm astounds the reader, and extricates the writer from a serious embarrassment, occasioned by the invincible opposition of some stubborn, unmanageable, and insuperable facts: like Hannibal, who, when arrested in his march by the rocks of the Alps, is said to have employed vinegar to dissolve them, and thus cleared a passage for his army. Such a writer securely relies upon having all the ignorant and indolent upon his side, and, accordingly, addresses himself principally to those who are disposed to mistake wit for argument, and ridicule for refutation—to those who, at all times, would rather be amused than instructed. But I need not enlarge any farther upon this method—which, when skilfully employed, is exceedingly effective—because it is in very general use, and many admirable specimens of it are to be found in our modern reviews. I trust, however, that the majority, at least, of those to whom this



publication is addressed, possess too much intellectual discernment to be imposed upon by sophistry of this description, or to accept of an argument, a sneer, or a sarcasm, as a sufficient refutation of a demonstrated fact. Let them remember that *Veritas non est de ratione faceti*; or, to borrow the words of the English poet,

“ Reason is ill refuted with a sneer.”

I am aware it may very naturally occur to the reader, that the topics I have undertaken to investigate in the following pages, would have been treated with much more scientific and technical skill and precision, and with much greater felicity of illustration, by some intelligent member of the medical profession, than by an individual who must be presumed to be little conversant with the cognate departments of knowledge. Nay, I may perhaps be reminded of the very judicious advice of the poet,

“ ..... quid medicorum est  
Pertractent medici; tractent fabrilia fabri.”

Now, I have not the slightest hesitation in amply acknowledging, as I deeply feel, my own deficiencies in the essential qualifications requisite for the adequate performance of the task I have, perhaps too arrogantly, undertaken; and, had I observed a disposition on the part of any gentleman of professional

education, in this country, to take up and investigate the subject, to communicate the result of his intelligent and impartial inquiries, and to add his acknowledged acquisitions to the already accumulated treasures of science, I should unquestionably never have presumed to obtrude myself upon public notice as an expounder of the apparent mysteries of Animal Magnetism; but, on the contrary, I should have been most happy to withdraw from the field, and abandon the task to hands more skilful than mine. But I regret having been at length compelled to relinquish all hope of any such professional and unprejudiced investigation. I am sorry to have found the medical gentlemen in Great Britain, with a very few honourable exceptions, divided into two classes in relation to this interesting study. The one is composed of individuals who place themselves in an attitude of determined hostility, resolved, it would appear, not even to listen to facts, far less to be convinced by reason—individuals whose object it seems to be, not only to render their own minds impenetrable to all rational conviction, but to endeavour to argue, to frighten, or to ridicule the rest of mankind out of the use of their natural faculties—to persuade them to shut their eyes, to close their ears, and to steel their understandings against the admission of even the evidence of truth, and to resign themselves impli-

citly, like true Catholics, to all the prejudices of foreclosed science. The other class consists of such as look upon the whole details of the subject with a listless and apathetic indifference, and whom it seems in vain to attempt to rouse out of that state of torpor and inanition—that more than magnetic sleep—into which they have permitted themselves to sink, as into a *slough of despond*.

It is not easy to discover the cause of this most extraordinary hostility and indifference, unless, perhaps, we may ascribe it to that propensity of the mind, which, after a certain routine of study and labour, indisposes it for the reception of new truths, which are supposed to stand in opposition to previous acquirements. The subject itself is sufficiently curious and interesting, and worthy of the most serious investigation; and it is difficult to imagine how any class of men, professing a love for the pursuits of science, and possessing every facility for extending their knowledge in an important department, can look with coldness upon an overwhelming mass of accumulated evidence, which has already forced complete conviction upon the minds of thousands of the most learned and enlightened individuals in Europe, and promises to open up many new and most interesting views in the philosophy of man. It is well known to all who are conversant with the subject, that, upon

the Continent, the record in this case, to use a legal phrase, has long been closed, and a favourable judgment pronounced by the learned; and the only oppugners of the doctrine of Animal Magnetism are now to be found, either among those who are too supercilious, too indolent, or too prejudiced to submit to the labour of inquiry; or among such as, like Zeno and Pyrrho of old, relying upon the quirks and quibbles of a perverted logic, would disprove the possibility of motion, or discredit the evidence of their own senses.\*

In these circumstances, therefore, conceiving it to be the duty of every man to impart to others that knowledge of which he believes himself to be in possession, more especially when, from its nature, it appears calculated to benefit mankind in general, I resolved to summon up that moral courage which, in the cause of truth, however unfa-

\* It seems the more extraordinary, that medical men in this country should obstinately decline the investigation of this subject, which promises not only to enlarge their professional knowledge, but to augment their practical means, and thus increase the sphere of their usefulness, considering the manifold imperfections which all great physicians have acknowledged to exist in their science. These imperfections have been fairly stated, and candidly admitted, by the celebrated Dr Abercrombie of Edinburgh, in his recent work *On the Intellectual Powers*, who does not hesitate to acknowledge, that "the uncertainty of medicine, which is a theme for the philosopher and the humorist, is deeply felt by the practical physician in the daily ex-

shionable or unpalatable, enables us to bid defiance to the sneers of ignorance and the prejudices of science, and to communicate to my countrymen some information with regard to those facts, of which both the authenticity and the value had long been recognised by our neighbours. I trust, however, that, in respect of my acknowledged deficiency in much of that species of learning, which, had I possessed it, would have rendered the execution of my task more easy, more perfect, and probably more acceptable to the profession, the following attempt to investigate a difficult subject will be treated with some corresponding indulgence.

“ Ne nostros contemne ausus, medicumque laborem :  
 . . . . .  
 Scilicet hac tenui rerum sub imagine multum  
 Naturæ, fatigue subest, et grandis origo.”

Some of the observations contained in the fol-

ercise of his art;” and having noticed the different departments of medical science, he ingenuously admits, that extended observation has only tended to render its deficiencies the more remarkable. Hence, no doubt, the daily success of quacks and empirics. Immediately previous to the observation above quoted, Dr Abersrombie alludes to the apologue which, according to D’Alembert, was made upon this subject, by a physician, a man of wit and of philosophy: “ Nature is fighting with the disease; a blind man armed with a club, that is the physician, comes to settle the disturbance. He first tries to make peace; when he cannot accomplish this, he lifts his club, and strikes at random; if he strikes the disease, he kills the disease; if he strikes nature, he kills nature.”

lowing work may perhaps be thought to have rather too controversial a complexion. This has been occasioned principally by the ignorance, prejudice and petulance with which the subject has generally been treated in this country. But the author disclaims all intention of offending the feelings of any individual.

The first edition of this Inquiry was an exceedingly hasty, and, consequently, a very imperfect production.\* In it, my principal object was to draw the attention of the public to the recent Report of the French Academicians. The volume seems to have excited some small sensation in different quarters; but I soon became aware that the

\* In hurrying it through the press, a slight error had, *per incuriam*, crept into the title-page of the first edition, which professed to give the translation of a Report by a Committee of the *Medical Section of the French Royal Academy of Sciences*, instead of the *Royal Academy of Medicine*. The error was altogether of a trivial nature, and the title was correctly given on the leaf preceding the Report. But—*parva leves capiunt animos*—a great deal is said to have been attempted to be made of this circumstance by the sceptics and opponents; nay, some, I am told, were disposed even to view it as decisive of the merit and fate of Animal Magnetism. Ridiculous! as if any such casual and unimportant error of mine could affect the credibility of the phenomena described, or as if the Royal Academy of Medicine were not the most competent tribunal before which this particular question could have been investigated. Whatever may be thought by individual members, an impartial inquiry into the pretensions of Animal Magnetism could have reflected no disgrace upon the Institute, or Royal Society of France.

introductory and explanatory matter which accompanied the Report, did not convey sufficient information to those to whom the subject was entirely new, or who had not the means or the leisure to prosecute the study in the writings of other authors. Besides, many most interesting phenomena were scarcely noticed, far less explained to the inquisitive reader; and I was anxious to exhibit a more extensive view both of the facts and of the evidence. Although, therefore, I have announced the present publication as a second edition of the former, it has been, in fact, almost entirely recomposed, and may be considered as nearly a new work. All the most important information contained in the former has been retained in this edition, whilst a great deal of new matter has been added. The French Report, which was the principal object of the former publication, I now deem of inferior importance, and I have therefore thrown it into the Appendix. Valuable as that document undoubtedly is, I found many persons disposed to consider it as containing the whole evidence in the case, instead of being, as it is in reality, a mere fragment.

I must still be permitted to express my hope, that this very interesting subject may soon engage the attention of some more competent inquirer.

EDINBURGH, 15th April 1836.

**P R E F A C E**  
**TO THE**  
**T H I R D E D I T I O N .**

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**T H E** Author has not thought it necessary to make any essential alteration on this last edition of his work.

Since the publication of the previous editions, indeed, the progress of Zoo-Magnetic Science, in this country, has, in some respects, surpassed his anticipations ; although nothing can be said to have been done which can be considered as having enlarged its boundaries. The public, however, after general attention to the subject had been roused, soon came to take a lively interest in the experimental investigation of the facts, which, although not always conducted in the most approved and most satisfactory manner, tended, at least, to attract the notice of the inquisitive, and to diffuse a knowledge of the phenomena. The exertions of **ELLIOTSON**, **DUPOTET**, **LAFONTAINE**, and others, succeeded in demon-



strating, to the conviction of many ingenuous and unprejudiced inquirers, the influence of the processes, and the reality of the facts ;—men of scientific attainments began to view the subject in a more favourable light ; and magnetic experiments have been exhibited, by various professors of the art, in almost all parts of the kingdom ; by which means the popular interest has been kept alive.—That these proceedings have been always conducted by the most competent persons, with the purest intentions, in the very best manner, and with the strictest attention to propriety and freedom from abuse, was not to be expected, and cannot be maintained. But greater experience, combined with more assiduous study, will, it is hoped, ultimately succeed in correcting any errors, misapplications and improprieties—in-incident, perhaps, to public and promiscuous experiments,—which may have hitherto prevailed, in consequence of an imperfect knowledge of the method, as well as of the objects and phenomena, of the science.

The Author has always been disposed to regard the medical application of the magnetic processes, as the most important branch of the subject ; and, in this department, a good deal has been already accomplished in England, since the first appearance of *Isis Revelata*. Dr ELLIOTSON, it is believed, was the first medical gentleman, in this country, who demonstrated the great utility of this practice ; in which he has had the merit of persevering, notwithstanding all the formidable obstacles he has met with, in the ignorance, interest, and prejudices of his professional brethren.

Mr. \* Mr BRAID of Manchester, has, more recently, applied his system of *Hypnotism*—a modification of the magnetic treatment—to the cure of many serious diseases, and his practice has been most successful. It is to be regretted, however, that this most intelligent practitioner should have involved himself, almost at the very commencement of his practice, in certain premature and very questionable theories upon this most interesting, but obscure subject. A more extensive study, and more varied practice, would probably tend to rectify and enlarge the too narrow and precipitate conclusions he has been led to embrace.† Premature spe-

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\* The Author has always been ready to do the most ample justice to the professional talents of DR ELLIOTSON, and to the assiduity, zeal, and perseverance he has displayed in the investigation of facts; but he can never cease to reprobate the erroneous and absurd speculative notions to which he has been induced to give the sanction of his authority, and which may tend to mislead incautious inquirers from the path of truth and real wisdom.

† I am very far from wishing to derogate from the just merit of Mr BRAID. I consider him a man of talents, ingenuity, and skill; and I have no doubt that his method occurred to himself as an entirely new discovery. But I consider the method employed by this ingenious gentleman as just an imperfect means of magnetization; and that, in fact, he is unconsciously magnetising his patients all the time he is making them gaze at his lancet-case.

JACOB BEHMEN, the famous mystic, is said to have been capable of placing himself in a state of ecstatic reverie, by gazing intently upon his metal ink-stand. Other individuals are reported to have done the same thing by similar means. MESMER, and some of his disciples were, at one time, in the habit of employing metal rods, as conductors of the magnetic influence to their patients. The effects produced by the mesmeric *baquets*

ulation has been the besetting sin of all Animal Magnetists from the days of MESMER downwards. If we are ever to have a just and adequate theory of Animal Magnetism, it must be made to comprehend, not a few phenomena merely, which may happen to have been developed in the practice of a single individual, in consequence of the employment of one particular process ; but it must embrace a vast mass of facts which have been accumulating for centuries, although but recently subjected to scientific investigation. These phenomena, too, must be contemplated in all the varieties of their manifestation—in all the different phases in which they present themselves to the observation of the inquirer. It were better, in the meantime, to have no theory at all, than one

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are well known. But some individuals have been occasionally placed in a state of magnetic sleep and insensibility, by a single glance from the eye of their magnetiser ; and again recalled to life and sensibility by the same means.

It is rather curious, that the unfavourable Report of the French Academicians, in 1784, notices, and actually admits the reality of these last mentioned facts. In speaking of the magnetic patients, the Report observes :—*Tous sont soumis à celui qui magnetise ; ils ont beau être dans un assoupissement apparent, sa voix, un regard, un signe les en retire. On ne peut s'empêcher de reconnaître à ces effets constants, une grande puissance qui agit les malades, qui les maîtrise, et dont celui qui magnetise semble être le depositaire*

Metals, however, have been found to exercise a peculiar influence upon some constitutional idiosyncrasies, as well as upon magnetic patients. But we cannot found a correct and legitimate conclusion in regard to the real cause of a phenomenon from the particular means which may happen to be employed for producing it in some individual instances. Other causes may be in operation which we do not immediately perceive, and, therefore, cannot appreciate.

which is inapplicable to the whole subject, which may very possibly mislead, and, at all events, can never conduct as to a perfect generalization, and to more satisfactory conclusions.

In regard to the new science, as it has been called, of *Phreno-Magnetism*, the Author has already taken an opportunity of explaining his views, in a small Tract recently published.\* He cannot but regret that the pursuits of science should be prostituted to such trivial purposes—*ad captandum vulgus*,—and attention thus withdrawn from those objects which are really important. It never ought to be forgotten that the true value of Animal Magnetism consists in its demonstrated efficacy, as a therapeutic agent ;—

(“ The rest is all but leather and prunella ;”)

and that all application of its processes to other than its legitimate purposes is, at least, useless, if not actually dangerous. To administer these processes recklessly and indiscriminately, especially in the case of healthy persons, is a grossly mischievous abuse. As well might we, in similar circumstances, resort to poison, or the dagger. By such unjustifiable conduct, we may induce permanent constitutional imbecility,—complete mental alienation, or actual, perhaps incurable, insanity. The Author is sorry to observe, that these abuses have been rather prevalent in England. They ought to be severely and universally repro-

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\* See *The Fallacy of Phreno-Magnetism, Detected and Exposed*. Edinburgh, 1843.

bated, and totally exploded. Were medical men to take this powerful remedy into their own hands,—apply it with judgment,—and use the proper means for promoting its success, these abuses of the practice would soon be effectually repressed. We are not entitled to sport with the lives, and health, and comfort of our fellow-creatures, for the mere gratification of our own selfish curiosity, or for the amusement of others. Sick persons alone, under proper precautions, are fit subjects for this mode of treatment; and none but individuals possessing adequate knowledge and skill should attempt the practice of Magnetism.

But amidst these abuses—which are, perhaps, in some degree unavoidable, and may occasionally occur even in the practice of ordinary medicine,—it is exceedingly gratifying to find, that several eminent medical gentlemen, in this country, have turned their serious attention to the practical advantages to be derived from the magnetic treatment of diseases. Dr ELLIOTSON,—whose talents and zeal have been long and successfully exerted in the cause of Magnetism, and who has given unequivocal proofs of his devotion to the interests of scientific medicine,—has published a very interesting account of “*Numerous cases of surgical operations without pain, in the mesmeric state,*”\* which places a very important magnetic principle, and its application to surgical practice, beyond all controversy. Instances of the same operation, attended with similar advantages and success,

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\* London, 1843.

are now frequently brought under the notice of the public. But still more numerous are the cases in which the magnetic treatment has afforded almost instantaneous relief from pain, besides alleviating serious morbid symptoms,—thus superseding the precarious use of narcotic drugs, and promoting the recovery of health, in circumstances where the ordinary resources of medical skill had previously failed. Of Mr BRAID'S practice, the Author has already spoken.\* Dr WILSON of the Middlesex Hospital, has published a most amusing account of his magnetic experiments upon animals, † and is understood to employ the processes professionally, for the cure of disease in the human subject. Many other intelligent practitioners are also devoting their attention to this mode of treatment. The Rev. Mr TOWNSEND, has favoured the public with a very instructive and entertaining volume, entitled :—“ *Facts in Mesmerism,*” ‡ containing chiefly a narrative of his own magnetic experiments, and an exposition of his theoretical views of the subject. This volume, it is believed, has been well received and extensively perused. Another most intelligent clergy-

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\* For further particulars in regard to Mr BRAID'S method, the reader is referred to the volume recently published by that eminent practitioner : *NEURYPNOLOGY ; or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep, &c.* By JAMES BRAID, M.B.C.S.E., &c. London, 1843.

† *Trials of Animal Magnetism on the Brute Creation.* By JOHN WILSON, Physician to the Middlesex Hospital. London, 1839.

‡ *Facts in Mesmerism, &c.* By the Rev. CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSEND.

man of the Church of England,—the Rev. GEORGE SANDBY, Vicar of Flixton, Suffolk, has very recently published a most interesting volume, under the title of “*Mesmerism and its Opponents*,”\* containing a luminous view of the subject in almost all its bearings, and a narrative of numerous cases, in which the efficacy of Animal Magnetism, in alleviating pain and curing diseases, was most satisfactorily tested. Besides the above-mentioned works, various articles upon this subject have been occasionally inserted in medical and other periodical publications, during the last two or three years.

For a year or two past, a number of itinerant professors of Mesmerism, as an art, have made their appearance in almost every town and village in the kingdom, for the purpose of making public exhibitions of the phenomena of their science. These exhibitions may possibly have been of some advantage in riveting public attention, and in more extensively diffusing a knowledge of the facts, and a conviction of the reality of the influence in action. But, in other respects, they are highly objectionable—they may be productive of mischief; and, at all events, they are now unnecessary, and ought to be entirely discontinued. The Author

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\* *Mesmerism and its Opponents, &c.* By GEORGE SANDBY, Jun. M. A. &c. London, 1844. This volume which has just come into my possession, is by much the most judicious publication I have yet met with on the subject of Animal Magnetism. It does great credit to the piety, the benevolence, the learning, talents, and judgment of the reverend author, and deserves extensive circulation.

has already alluded to the abuses which may arise from the unskilful and indiscriminate exercise of this influence ; and a public theatre is far from being the fittest place for conducting magnetic experiments.

A series of demonstrations, indeed, of a rather more scientific character, took place at Glasgow about twelve months ago, and several curious and most interesting cases occurred, of which a very distinct and able account was published, in the course of the last autumn, by Mr WILLIAM LANG, of that city.\* These cases present some of the very few instances of decided magnetic *clairvoyance* which appear to have been hitherto developed in this country.

It is to be hoped that those most intelligent gentlemen, especially those of the medical profession, who have hitherto endeavoured to enlighten their countrymen in regard to the facts, and principles, and tendencies of Animal-Magnetism or Mesmerism,† will continue their exertions in the good cause. Let

\* *MESMERISM : Its History, Phenomena, and Practice, with Reports of Cases developed in Scotland.*—Edinburgh, 1843.

† I still continue to use the name ANIMAL-MAGNETISM, as the most appropriate term to designate this science, although it appears to have been almost entirely abandoned by our English writers on the subject. My reasons for retaining it are :—

1. Because it is the name originally given by MESMER himself to his discovery, and has been retained by a large majority of his successors.
2. Because MESMERISM would seem to imply an acquiescence in, and an adoption of, the theories of MESMER, while ANIMAL MAGNETISM merely implies a recognition of the reality of the fact discovered, and involves no particular theory. Many are ANIMAL MAGNETISTS who are not *Mesmerists*.
3. There are indications of a peculiar magnetic power manifested in some



them only persevere in their beneficent labours ; others, no doubt, will gradually be induced to follow their example ; and it may be confidently anticipated that one of the safest, the most powerful, and the most efficacious of remedies will speedily be acknowledged, even by physicians, as a valuable accession to the resources of the healing art. It is a remarkable circumstance, that not one individual who once became thoroughly acquainted with Zoo-Magnetic science, and especially with the utility of the practice, was ever subsequently induced to abandon his conviction of its truth and importance ; and it is, perhaps, still more singular that, so far as the inquiries of the Author have extended, every one of the most learned and valuable adherents of the system, without, it is believed, a single exception, was originally a decided, if not a virulent sceptic. Experimental investigation has uniformly been followed by firm and unalterable conviction.

But it is to the Continent of Europe, especially France and Germany, that we must look for the most important contributions to the theory and practice of Animal Magnetism. It was there that the discovery was made and promulgated, and there the new science was cultivated for half a century before public attention, in this country, was roused to the subject. In the last edition of this work, the progress of the

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of the phenomena ; and from this circumstance MESMER is said to have derived the name of his discovery.

4. It is injudicious to change a once established designation without sufficient cause. It creates confusion, and places a weapon in the hands of the sceptical opponents.

science was brought down to the celebrated Report of the Committee of the Royal Academy of Medicine of Paris, in 1831, which gave a fresh *impetus* to the investigation throughout Europe. It only remains that we should bring down our historical sketch to the present time.

It was scarcely to be expected that the Report in question, cautious and moderate, and able and accurate, as it was, should have altogether escaped the cavils of some of those individuals who, from whatever motives, had always manifested an obstinate and irrational sceptical opposition towards the subject of investigation, and evinced an inveterate jealousy of the introduction of the magnetic practice. Among these, M. DUBOIS of Amiens, distinguished himself by his unreasonable violence and acrimony.\* He published a cavilling

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\* The following anecdote may perhaps, in some measure, account for the violent antipathy which M. DUBOIS has manifested towards Animal Magnetism.

A patient had been suffering for eleven years from *fstula in ano* and stricture of the *rectum*. She had been placed under the treatment of a great number of the most eminent surgeons and physicians of France, and had used the waters of Bagnères, without success. She afterwards came under the care of M. DUBOIS, and other practitioners of Paris, who declared an operation to be impossible. According to the prescription of M. DUBOIS, the patient was then treated by means of injections and various medicines, but in vain. She was rapidly sinking, and at length became disgusted with the medical treatment.—She was afterwards magnetised; and in the very first of her *crises*, she rejected the prescriptions of M. DUBOIS, and prescribed for herself. She subsequently predicted that she should be perfectly cured on a particular day, and her prediction was exactly verified.

Now, we have not been able to ascertain precisely whether the M. DUBOIS referred to in the foregoing case be the identical M. DUBOIS of Anti-mag-

*critique* upon the Report of the Academicians, which was remarkable chiefly for its impertinence and absurdity. But this was not enough to gratify his antagonism. In the year 1837, M. BERNA, a physician of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, requested the Academy to appoint a Committee of their number for the purpose of examining two female Somnambulists, who had manifested some very remarkable phenomena. This opportunity was too good to be lost by the opponents of Magnetism. A hostile Committee was appointed; M. DUBOIS acted as their reporter; and the Report itself should it survive, will ever be distinguished as a memorable specimen of scientific folly and chicanery.\* Its absurdity and bad faith were sufficiently exposed in the Academy by M.

netic notoriety; but if he be the same individual, it will not be difficult to perceive the cause of his bitter hostility. He is probably not the only physician who stands in this situation.

\* As characteristic of the spirit in which this proceeding was conducted, the reader may take the following fact:—

At the period in question (1838) there were two Messrs CLOQUET members of the Academy—the one M. HIPPOLYTE CLOQUET, a physician (since dead), and M. JULES CLOQUET, the celebrated surgeon and anatomist, who, it may be recollected, performed the memorable operation for cancer upon MAD. PLANTIN, while in Somnambulism.

In the report of M. DUBOIS referred to in the text, M. HIPPOLYTE CLOQUET, who was one of the commissioners, was designated simply by his surname, CLOQUET,—evidently for the purpose of misleading the public. After the report had been read in the Academy, M. JULES CLOQUET asked the reporter (M. DUBOIS) whether he did not intend that his brother's name should pass for his. M. DUBOIS answered, *that this was really his intention*; “that it was a good joke to make Magnetism appear to be condemned by a semi-partisan, and that this would much increase the value of the

HUSSON, the celebrated reporter of the former Committee in 1831 ; and M. BERNA also published an examination and refutation of the Report of M. DUBOIS.\* As these *tracasseries*, however, were not calculated to promote the credit of the Academy, that learned body, it is believed, has ceased to take any prominent part in the investigation, which has since been left, in a great measure, to the exertions of its individual members ; of whom a large majority are understood to be perfectly convinced of the truth of the Zoo-Magnetic facts. The number and violence of the opponents have almost daily diminished,—numerous experiments have been followed by almost universal conviction, and scarcely a voice is now raised against the truth and utility of the science.

In the year 1838, however, a circumstance occurred at Paris, too remarkable, perhaps, to be passed over unnoticed in an historical sketch of the progress of Animal Magnetism, and the development of its most extraordinary phenomena. The fact that some Somnambulists have been found capable of exercising the faculty of vision without the use of the eyes, has always afforded a prolific theme for scepticism and ridicule to the ignorant and incredulous, as well as to the professed opponents of the science. The phenomenon itself is

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report !!! — See *Histoire du Somnambulisme*, par AUBIN GAUTHIER, t. ii. p. 380.

In fact, the whole of this proceeding was a complete burlesque, and was probably intended to be so.

\* *Examen et Refutation du Rapport fait a l'Academie de Medecine, le 8 Aout 1837, sur le Magnetisme Animal.* Par D. J. BERNA, D.M. 1838.

rarely manifested ; it occurs only in a high degree of the affection ; it is precarious in its manifestations at various times, even in the same individual ; but its occasional existence, both in the natural and the magnetic Somnambulism, has been most amply demonstrated by the conclusive experiments of DR PÉTRIN, of Lyons, and a great number of other most intelligent practitioners, as the Author has endeavoured to show in the Appendix, No. II. of this work ; and it is now universally admitted by every experienced Magnetist upon the Continent.\* To those who are acquainted with the extremely delicate sensibility of Somnambulists, especially of such as are under the influence of Magnetism, with the consequent facility with which they are liable to be disturbed in their operations, and with the evanescent nature of the phenomena themselves, it must be evident that this is a manifestation which is not very capable of being exhibited in public, amidst a promiscuous crowd of spectators. Of this difficulty the opponents of Magnetism appear to be aware.

In the year 1837, M. BURDIN, a physician of Paris, deposited in the hands of the Academy of Medicine the sum of 3000 francs, as a prize to the individual who should satisfactorily manifest in public this anomalous faculty of vision, by reading without the use of the eyes ; the prize to be awarded

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\* Should the public interest in this subject continue unrelaxed, the author meditates the publication of a small work, now nearly ready for the press, on the phenomena of Somnambulism, which, he presumes to think, will set the question in regard to this fact completely at rest.

by a committee of the Academy, to be nominated for the purpose of investigating the fact. About the same period, M. PIGEAIRE, a physician of Montpellier, who had previously known nothing of Animal Magnetism, which he had hitherto considered a mere system of jugglery, happened to witness some of the experiments of M. DUPOTET; and he had also an opportunity of observing some of the remedial effects of the processes, which surprised him. His wife, MADAME PIGEAIRE, examined a Somnambulist, and was as much surprised as her husband. One evening, whether from curiosity or other motives, MADAME PIGEAIRE began to imitate the manipulations of M. DUPOTET on her youngest daughter, a girl of ten years of age. In the course of ten minutes the child closed her eyes, dropt her head, and remained motionless. When asked questions, she answered them in her sleep, and when she awoke she recollected nothing that had occurred. The experiments were repeated upon other occasions, and at length the child manifested some of the most extraordinary phenomena of Somnambulism, and, amongst others, that of *vision without the use of the eyes*.

Before M. BURDIN offered his prize, M. PIGEAIRE had addressed a memoir to the Academy of Medicine, requesting that a committee should be named for the purpose of investigating the case of his daughter. The request was subsequently repeated, and M. PIGEAIRE repaired to Paris. It was evident that this gentleman felt more interest in the establishment of the fact, than anxiety to obtain the BURDIN prize. Previously to the formal trial in presence of the

Academical committee, M. PIGEAIRE resolved to institute some preparatory experiments ; and for this purpose he invited several members of the Academy, and other physicians, who accordingly met at his house. The experiments were eminently successful. Several other meetings were held, and the experiments were frequently repeated with the same result. Besides a number of the most eminent physicians who were present at these meetings, we find the names of MM. ARAGO, ORFILA, ESQUIROL, JULES CLOQUET, and of almost all the celebrated scientific and literary characters of Paris. The *proces-verbaux*, verifying the facts, were signed by all the persons present, with a few exceptions.

Let us now see how the Academical committee proceeded. They had one interview—and only one—with M. PIGEAIRE, at which there was some discussion about the mode of bandaging the eyes of the patient. *They never attended a single experimental meeting,—they never made any investigation at all,—they never witnessed an experiment, either as members of the committee, as physicians, or as mere individuals,—they never even saw the child who was to be the subject of experiment, either in Somnambulism, or in her ordinary state.* In these circumstances—the fact will scarcely be credited—the committee actually presented a report to the Academy, in which they insinuated that they had attended meetings,—that they had made an investigation,—that, in reality, *the Somnambulist did read with her eyes bandaged* ; but that, in their investigation, they had not obtained a conviction of the magnetic clairvoyance ; and they concluded by declaring

that there were no grounds for awarding the BURDEN prize. Truly, they manage these matters strangely in France! But what else could have been expected, when it appears that the courteous, the candid, the indefatigable partisan M. DUBOIS, the reporter of the BERNA committee, was at the bottom of the whole business? This committee, it is pretty evident, were aware that the fact they were appointed to investigate had already been completely demonstrated at the preparatory meetings; they dreaded the result of any particular investigation in their own presence; and, accordingly, they fraudulently attempted to smother up the whole matter by means of ambiguous statements, and unwarranted hypotheses.\*

In Germany, the prosecution of scientific objects is conducted with less *eclât*, indeed, but with more earnestness and good faith, than in France. In the former country, the most important magnetic facts have long been regarded as matters of demonstrated and unquestionable certainty. The investigation has been carried on almost entirely by individual inquirers, without the intervention of jealousy and cabal; and statesmen, philosophers, physiologists, physicians,

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\* For a circumstantial account of the whole of this discreditable business, the reader is referred to the following works:—

*Puissance de l'Electricité Animale ou du Magnetisme Vital, et de ses Rapports avec la Physique, la Physiologie, et la Médecine*, par J. PIGEAIRE, D.M. 1839.

*Lettres sur le Magnetisme et le Somnambulisme, a l'occasion de MADemoiselle PIGEAIRE*, par le Docteur FRAPART, 1839.

*Histoire du Somnambulisme, &c.* par AUBIN GAUTHIER, Paris, 1842.



soldiers, lawyers, and theologians, have vied with each other in their endeavours to explain the demonstrated phenomena, and to illustrate their analogical relations to the other sciences. Numerous valuable publications on the subject are continually issuing from the press ; and a real, or even a pretended sceptic, in regard to Animal-Magnetism, is not often to be found in society.

But the triumphs of Animal-Magnetism have not been confined to Europe. The science has long since crossed the Atlantic ocean, and is at present cultivated, with great ardour and success, by our American brethren. In short, it has already conquered for itself a firm establishment in every portion of the civilized globe.

In concluding this Preface, the Author must take the liberty of addressing a few words to our sceptical physicians.

A great deal is said about medical experience—the science of medicine is entirely founded upon experience—the experience of two thousand years. Be it so. A French physician of no little eminence in his day—**BROUSSAIS**—asserts that “the art of medicine, in its origin, was nothing but a rude empiricism, which chance or instinct suggested to mankind.” Well, then, the sceptical physicians seem not sufficiently to advert to the fact, that the practice of Animal-Magnetism has had an origin and progress precisely similar to those of the medical art itself. Indeed, the former would appear to have been fully more ancient than the latter. Natural instinct or accident appears to have suggested it ; practice and investigation developed its influence, and improved its

processes ; experience confirmed its efficacy and utility. Subsequently, indeed—from causes which it is unnecessary to enumerate here—medicine came to supersede magnetism ; as, in consequence of one of those periodical revolutions, to which all human sciences and institutions, as well as mighty empires, are occasionally liable, magnetism now threatens to supersede medicine. Let the refractory physicians of the old school look to themselves. Let them gracefully accept of the olive-branch, while it is still presented to them. **MEDICINE AND MAGNETISM OUGHT TO BE CONJOINED.** This is an age of rapid improvement in the arts and sciences, as well as in political, economical, and social arrangements. The steam-engine and the railway are at work in the moral, no less than in the physical world. Symptoms of a great reformation have been, for some time, apparent on the horizon of medicine. For the general advantage of all, it were wise to pay a little more attention to the manifest signs of the times.

“Sixty years ago,” says Dr TESTE, “the Faculty of Paris raised their buckler against us ; sixty years ago, they sent forth the *hue and cry* against the magnetisers. The word of command was given ; it was passed from mouth to mouth ; it is transmitted from father to son ; it is engraved on the tablets of the law, and sculptured in relief on the front of the temple, there to remain until the temple itself shall crumble into dust. Well ! be it so ;—we shall bide our time : for this great struggle approaches its termination ;

and the result cannot be doubtful, seeing that we have truth for our device, and the universe for our judge."—See *Manuel pratique de Magnetisme Animal*, par ALPH. TESTE, Docteur en Medecine, &c. Paris, 1840.

## INTRODUCTION.

Miretur populus miracula ; nil mihi mirum  
Præter eum, solus qui facit illa, DEUM.

OWEN.



## INTRODUCTION.

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It is not uncommon for persons, ignorant of the nature of the alleged phenomena of Animal Magnetism, to denounce them as pretended miracles, and hold them up to ridicule. This is extremely irrational. A miracle is a violation of some general and known law of nature, in consequence of the immediate interposition of a Superior Power; and, in the sense of this definition, it is not pretended by any of the philosophical adherents of the doctrine, that there are any miracles in Animal Magnetism. The experiments, indeed, by which the reality of its peculiar phenomena has been established, have disclosed a number of extraordinary and most interesting facts; but the occasional occurrence of every fact, however uncommon, is capable of being demonstrated by evidence; it can be shewn to be the result of natural causes; and it then becomes quite unphilosophical to regard it as a real or pretended miracle.

Previous to the wonderful discoveries which have been made in modern times, relative to the

properties and action of Heat, of Electricity, of Galvanism, &c., had any man ventured to anticipate the powers and uses of the Steam-engine, the Electrical Machine, the Voltaic Pile, or of any other of those mighty instruments by means of which the mind of man has acquired so vast a dominion over the world of matter, he would probably have been considered as a visionary or a madman; and had he been able to exhibit the effects of any of these instruments, before the principles which regulate their action had become generally known to philosophers, they would, in all likelihood, have been attributed to supernatural agency; and we should then, perhaps, have heard of the miracles of Mechanical Philosophy, as we now hear of the miracles of Animal Magnetism. In the strict and proper sense of the word, there are no miracles either in the one or in the other; both are merely conversant with the natural effects of natural agencies. There is no error more arrogant or more irrational than that which leads us to measure the reality of phenomena, or the possibilities of nature, by the line of our own limited experience—to weigh them in the balance of our own partial understanding—with an utter disregard of positive facts, established by real and satisfactory evidence. Every man who has passed the mere threshold of science, ought to be aware, that it is quite possible for us to be in

possession of a fact, or even of a series of facts, long before we become capable of giving a rational and satisfactory explanation of them ; in short, before we are enabled to discover their causes ; and to such unexplained facts, especially when they appear to be attended with mystery, the vulgar give the name of miracles.\* But this is an abuse of language—unphilosophical and dangerous—which ought to be stigmatized and exploded.†

Indeed, were we to regard all extraordinary and

\* The conduct of some of the opponents of Animal Magnetism, is the most irrational that can be conceived. They sneer at our labours, and ridicule our facts, and then call upon us to explain the phenomena. They first discourage all investigation, and then taunt us with not doing that which investigation only can accomplish.

† Many *natural miracles*, along with their scientific explanations, will be found in Sir David Brewster's learned and amusing *Letters on Natural Magic*. Take the following as one instance. We have probably all heard of the celebrated *Spectre of the Brocken*, one of the Hartz Mountains in Germany. This spectre consists of a gigantic figure, which has, from time immemorial, occasionally appeared in the heavens to a spectator on the top of the mountain, and given rise to the traditional belief that it is haunted by supernatural beings. This figure has been seen by many travellers. In speaking of it, M. Jordan says, " In the course of my repeated tours through the Hartz Mountains, I often, but in vain, ascended the Brocken, that I might see the spectre. At length, on a serene morning, as the sun was just appearing above the horizon, it stood before me, at a great distance, towards the opposite mountain. It seemed to be the gigantic figure of a man. It vanished in a moment." In September 1706, the celebrated Abbé Hauy visited this country. He says,



apparently unaccountable phenomena as miracles, I suspect that we should have a great many more of such miracles than those of Animal Magnetism. Every science, in short, would have its own peculiar miracles. We should then have the miracles of Astronomy, of Chemistry, of Mineral Magnetism, of Electricity, of Galvanism, and as many more classes of miracles as there are departments of natural knowledge. For of many of the phenomena that occur in these sciences, what more do we know than that they have been demonstrated to exist in certain circumstances, and under certain condi-

“ After having ascended the mountain for thirty times, I at last saw the spectre. It was just at sunrise, in the middle of the month of May, about four o'clock in the morning. I saw distinctly a human figure of a monstrous size. The atmosphere was quite serene towards the east. In the south-west, a high wind carried before it some light vapours, which were scarcely condensed into clouds, and hung round the mountain upon which the figure stood. I bowed; the colossal figure repeated it. I paid my respects a second time, which was returned with the same civility. I then called the landlord of the inn, and having taken the same position which I had occupied before, we looked towards the mountain, when we clearly saw two such colossal figures, which, after having repeated our compliments, by bending their bodies, vanished.” Here, then, was a popular miracle, so long as the phenomenon continued unexplained.

Now, the following is the simple explanation of this singular and apparently preternatural apparition.

“ When the rising sun throws his rays over the Brocken upon the body of a man standing opposite to fleecy clouds, let the beholder fix his eye steadily upon them, and, in all probability, he will see his own shadow extending the length of 500 or 600 feet, at the distance of about two miles from him.”

tions? and this we also know in regard to the phenomena of Animal Magnetism. If no facts were to be admitted in science, excepting such as are found to coincide with our own previous observation, or such as could be immediately referred to some known principle as their cause, our whole knowledge might be compressed within very narrow bounds; there would be an end to all farther advancement, and the book of Nature would henceforth be to us a sealed volume.

With regard to Astronomy, the celebrated Sir John Herschell, in the Introduction to his late admirable treatise upon that interesting study, observes, that "there is no science which draws more largely upon that intellectual liberality, which is ready to adopt whatever is demonstrated, or to concede whatever is rendered highly probable, however new and uncommon the points of view may be in which objects the most familiar may thereby become placed. *Almost all its conclusions stand in open and striking contradiction with those of superficial and vulgar observation, and with what appears to every one, until he has understood and weighed the proofs to the contrary, the most positive evidence of his senses.*"\*

\* When the early philosophers of the Italian school explained to their disciples, upon the principles of their astronomical system, the very simple causes of the solar and lunar eclipses, and other natural phenomena, which were generally regarded by

These observations of Sir John Herschell, in relation to the facts and conclusions of Astronomy, are probably applicable, in a greater or less degree, to all the sciences. In general Physics, for example, "what mere assertion will make any man believe that, in one second of time, in one beat of the pendulum of a clock, a ray of light travels over 192,000 miles, and would therefore perform the tour of the world in about the same time that it requires to wink with our eyelids, and in much less than a swift runner occupies in taking a single stride? What mortal can be made to believe, without demonstration, that the sun is almost a million times larger than the earth? and that, although so remote from us that a cannon-ball, shot directly towards it, and maintaining its full speed, would be twenty years in reaching it, it yet affects the earth by its attraction in an inappreciable instant of time? Who would not ask for demonstration, when told that a gnat's wing, in its ordinary flight, beats many hundred times in a second? or that there exist animated and regularly organized beings, many thousands of whose bodies, laid close mankind with surprise and terror, they did so under the seal of the most sacred secrecy, in order to avoid the fury of the people and the imputation of impiety; these events being considered by the vulgar as produced by the direct agency of the gods. Similar circumstances probably gave rise to those *Harmonic Societies* which sprung up during the infancy of Animal Magnetism.

together, would not extend an inch? But what are these to the astonishing truths which modern optical inquiries have disclosed, which teach us that every point of a medium through which a ray of light passes, is affected with a succession of periodical movements, regularly recurring at equal intervals, no less than 500 millions of millions of times in a single second! that it is by such movements, communicated to the nerves of our eyes, that we see—nay more, that it is the difference in the frequency of their recurrence which affects us with the sense of the diversity of colour; that, for instance, in acquiring the sensation of redness, our eyes are affected 482 millions of millions of times; of yellowness, 542 millions of millions of times; and of violet, 707 millions of millions of times *per second*? Do not such things sound more like the ravings of a madman, than the sober conclusions of people in their waking senses? They are, nevertheless, conclusions to which any one may most certainly arrive, who will only be at the trouble of examining the chain of reasoning by which they have been obtained.\*”

\* *Cabinet Cyclopædia*.—To compare art with nature, let us look, for a moment, at the miracles of machinery. Mr W. Pares, at a public meeting lately, at Birmingham, stated, in proof of the increase of the power of production by the improvement of machinery, that, in 1792, the machinery in existence was equal to the labour of ten millions of labourers; in 1827, to two hundred millions; and in 1833, to four hundred millions. In the

“How strangely,” says one of the very few intelligent English disciples of Mesmer (the late Mr Chenevix)—“how strangely must they estimate nature, how highly must they value themselves, who deny the possibility of any cause of any effect, merely because it is incomprehensible! For, in fact, what do men comprehend? Of what do they know the causes? When Newton said, that gravitation held the world together, did he assign the reason why the heavenly bodies do not fly off from each other into infinite space? He did but teach a word, and that word has gained admittance, as it were, surreptitiously, amid causes, even in the minds of the most enlightened, insomuch that to doubt it now were a proof of ignorance and folly.

“Let an untutored Indian hear, for the first time, that the moon which rolls above his head is suspended there by the power of gravitation; that she obeys the influence of every little speck which his eye can discern in the firmament; of orbs

cotton trade, spindles that used to revolve fifty times a minute, now revolve, in some cases, eight thousand times a minute. At one mill at Manchester, there are 136,000 spindles at work, spinning one million two hundred thousand miles of cotton thread per week. Mr Owen, at New Lanark, with 2500 people, daily produces as much cotton-yarn as will go round the earth twice and a half. The total machinery in the kingdom is calculated now to be equal to the work of four hundred millions, and might be increased to an incalculable extent under proper management.

placed beyond them again, but invisible to us, because their light has not yet reached our globe; that the earth cannot be shaken, and the shock not communicated through the whole system of the universe; that every pebble under his feet as virtually rules the motions of Saturn as the sun can do. Let him then be told that one sentient being, placed in the vicinity of another sentient being, can, by a certain action of his nervous system, produce the daily phenomenon, sleep, and the rarer one, somnambulism; and which of these lessons would he be the most prompt to credit? Certainly not that which inculcates an insensible action and reaction between infinite masses, separated by infinite distances. The pride of learning, the arrogance of erudition, deem it ignoble to believe what they cannot explain; while simple instinct, struck with awe by every thing, is equally open to credit what it cannot as what it can comprehend, and admits no scholastic degrees of marvellousness."

Now, if there be any individuals who are disposed to reject the alleged phenomena of Animal Magnetism, at once, and without any serious examination of their reality, as utterly inexplicable, marvellous, and incredible, I would humbly recommend to them, before taking such a precipitate and, I may be allowed to say, irrational step, to consider well whether it were a greater miracle

that these facts should be true, or that some hundreds of the most sober, enlightened, respectable, and competent observers, in all parts of Europe, at different periods of time, without any possible concert amongst each other, and without any imaginable motive for falsehood and deception, should have wilfully and recklessly compromised their own honourable and scientific characters, by declaring that they had witnessed certain phenomena of a most remarkable and unambiguous description, which, in reality, had no existence; that these learned and most respectable individuals should have accidentally stumbled upon and trodden the same extraordinary path of paltry and unprofitable deception, and openly, anxiously, and impudently proclaimed their own folly, and dishonesty, and moral turpitude, to the world at large; and, moreover—most miraculous of all!—that this foolish and false testimony should happen to be supported and confirmed, in almost all its essential particulars, by strong collateral evidence of the most unsuspecting nature. To adopt this last alternative, I do not hesitate to affirm, implies, in my humble opinion, our belief of a much greater miracle than any credence we might accord to the facts themselves; which last, indeed, lose all their miraculous character the moment we abandon all theoretical prejudices, lay our minds open to demonstration, and

become satisfied that they are real, natural phenomena. The best means of obtaining conviction, especially in the case of professional gentlemen—and to them, principally, I would seriously recommend the inquiry—is to make careful experiments, for which an extensive practice must afford them many valuable opportunities; and should they pursue the appropriate methods in the right spirit, and in suitable circumstances, I may safely assure them that their efforts cannot fail to be crowned with success. Indeed, I cannot anticipate that the enlightened professors of the healing art, animated with that zeal and benevolence which essentially characterise their fraternity, will much longer shut their eyes to some of the most interesting and important phenomena of nature—that they will much longer neglect a method of treatment, which, besides increasing their therapeutic knowledge, promises to multiply their resources, by enabling them more effectually to cure or alleviate many of those diseases which afflict humanity.

I have been thus earnest in my endeavours to persuade my readers to throw aside all prejudice and prepossession, and submit to patient and unbiassed investigation, because I have almost invariably found that those persons, however otherwise learned and intelligent, to whom any of the more extraordinary phenomena of Animal Magnetism



have been for the first time mentioned, have either listened to the circumstances with an incredulous wonder, or attempted to demonstrate the impossibility of their occurrence upon some commonly received principle of science. Now, what I am desirous of impressing upon their minds is this—that an alleged fact is not necessarily false, because it may seem extraordinary, unaccountable, or apparently inconsistent with some assumed scientific principle. Human wisdom is fallible; but Nature, when viewed with unjaundiced eyes and unprejudiced judgment, cannot deceive us in the end; nor can her manifestations ever come into real collision with the conclusions of a just philosophy: *Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dixit.* The fact itself must first be strictly investigated; and if this investigation be conducted with skill and impartiality, it may possibly turn out, not that the alleged phenomenon is false, but that the adverse theory is either unfounded, or at least imperfect, or perhaps inapplicable in the peculiar circumstances of the case. In a subsequent part of this volume, I shall have occasion to direct the attention of the reader to a very remarkable, a very extraordinary, state of the human organism, which sometimes occurs naturally or spontaneously, sometimes in consequence of a morbid state of the system, and is sometimes produced artificially by means of the magnetic pro-

cesses. Of the occasional existence of this extraordinary state—which is generally, although perhaps not very properly, denominated *Somnambulism*\*—it is impossible to doubt; but its very singular phenomena have never yet been sufficiently investigated by physiologists. To those who have made adequate inquiry, it must be abundantly obvious, that the state of Somnambulism is totally different from the ordinary organic state of existence, and that the appearances it presents are incapable of explanation upon the common principles of physiology. But it would be very unphilosophical indeed, to regard this inconsistency as a proof of the non-existence of that peculiar state, in the face of our actual experience. The proper method of proceeding would be, first to ascertain the reality of the facts, and then to alter or enlarge our theory, so as to enable it to comprehend, and, if possible, account for the newly-observed phenomena.

I could easily point out to the notice of my readers many striking instances illustrative of the

\* The impropriety of the term *Somnambulism*, or sleep-walking, when employed to distinguish the state in question, has been remarked by many authors, and several others have been suggested as more characteristic of the affection. That of *Somno-vigil* appears to me to be the most appropriate, signifying that the mind is awake while the body sleeps. I am aware, however, of the difficulty of altering expressions which have become fixed, as it were, by general use; and I would recommend to my readers to attend to things rather than to words.

difficulty of obtaining credence to the statement of new, rare, or unnoticed facts, however well established, when they appear extraordinary in themselves, or seem calculated to invalidate a favourite theory, or to contradict preconceived opinions.\* I need not remind my readers of those days of scientific darkness, in which eclipses of the sun and moon, the appearance of comets, meteors, and other natural phenomena, were generally looked upon as miracles, frequently as harbingers of Divine wrath to mankind; nor will I go back to Galileo's restored doctrine of the earth's motion, or to Sir Isaac Newton's splendid discoveries in physics, because these, I apprehend, must be familiar to most of us; but shall take my examples from the latest history of scientific discovery.

The very first instance I shall adduce, strongly illustrates the influence of prejudice and preconceived opinion, even over otherwise enlightened minds.—“It is not without reason,” says a recent writer, “that the epithet *uncouth* has been applied to the *Dodo*; for two distinguished naturalists, in their day, maintained, for many years, that such a

\* Every one knows how much opposition the Copernican theory experienced, for a long time, from prejudice and prepossession, and in what contempt it continued to be held by the learned as well as the vulgar. The persecution of Galileo, the tardy reception of the theory of Harvey, and of the discoveries of Newton, are equally notorious.

form had never existed but in the imagination of the painter. One of these individuals, however, at length had an opportunity of inspecting the well known specimen of the head of the Dodo, which is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford; and was then convinced that such a bird had really existed. But so far was he from producing the same conviction in the mind of his friend by the description of the specimen, that he incurred the charge of an intentional deception; and the result was, that an interminable feud arose between them: for although they were attached to the same institution, and lived within its walls,..... they never again spoke to each other.”\*

The next example to which I shall refer, relates to one of the most curious and most beneficial discoveries that have been made in modern times; and it affords an apt illustration of the absurdity of denying the possibility of facts before investigating their reality.

“Authorities,” says M. Arago,—who, however eminent in the physical and mathematical sciences, is, I am informed, a decided opponent of Animal Magnetism,—“authorities, I admit, are of little weight in matters of science, in the face of positive facts; but it is necessary that these facts exist,

\* See Dr Kidd's *Bridgewater Treatise*.

that they have been subjected to severe examination, that they have been skilfully grouped, with a view to extract from them the truths they conceal. He who ventures to treat, *a priori*, a fact as absurd, wants prudence. He has not reflected on the numerous errors he would have committed in regard to many modern discoveries. I ask, for example, if there can be any thing in the world more *bizarre*, more incredible, more inadmissible, than the discovery of Dr Jenner?—Well! the *bizarre*, the incredible, the inadmissible, is found to be true; and the preservative against the small-pox is, by unanimous consent, to be sought for in the little pustule that appears in the udder of the cow.\*—So far M. Arago. I have read of an eminent physician at Berlin, whose prejudice against this discovery was so inveterate, that, to the last moment of his life, he never ceased to inveigh against vaccination, as the *brutal inoculation*.

\* These observations appear to be exceedingly applicable to their author himself, in so far as regards the opinions he is said to have uttered respecting the phenomena of Animal Magnetism. M. Arago, however, I believe to be no less distinguished for his liberality, than for his talents and scientific acquirements; and I would, therefore, humbly recommend to that eminent individual to investigate the subject more thoroughly and more minutely, before he ventures to pronounce a decided opinion upon it. I think he will admit that the evidence could not have been feeble, which produced conviction in the mind of his celebrated countryman, Cuvier.

Dr Elliotson, in one of his medical lectures, when speaking of the prejudices that prevailed against the original introduction of inoculation for the small-pox into England, observes, that "many clergymen and dissenting ministers raved against it from the pulpit, and called inoculation the *offspring of atheism*: those who performed it were called *sorcerers*, and the whole thing was said to be a *diabolical invention of Satan*. Others, however, were of a different opinion, and Bishop Maddox and Dr Doddridge defended it, and in doing so employed scriptural quotations. You know," continues Dr Elliotson, "that the devil can quote Scripture to suit his own purposes, and therefore it was very fair for good men to quote Scripture too. However, the reasonable side of the question at last prevailed." I have thought it proper to make this reference to the analogous case of the introduction of inoculation, because I am aware that similar arguments (if such they can be called), have been, and may still be employed, by certain well-meaning, perhaps, but weak, ill-informed, and mistaken persons, in relation to the study, the practice, and the phenomena of **Animal Magnetism**.

The two next instances I shall bring forward, in illustration of this subject, seem still more apposite to our own case; inasmuch as they relate to facts which had been observed for many ages, before

their authenticity was fully established by demonstration.

The first of these relates to the curious phenomenon of *spontaneous combustion*, or that internal burning to which animal bodies are occasionally liable. This fact appears to have been known to the ancients, and many instances of it have been recorded. The reality of this phenomenon, however, although believed by some, was, for a long time, doubted by many, until, in recent times, Sir David Brewster, in his amusing and instructive *Letters on Natural Magic*, has shewn that it has been completely established by evidence; and I believe it is now generally admitted by physicians and philosophers.

The last instance I shall particularly refer to, is derived from the discovery of what are called *meteoric stones*.

That solid masses fell from above upon the earth, connected with the appearance of meteors, had been advanced as early as 500 years before the Christian era, by the Greek philosopher Anaxagoras; and the same idea had been brought forward in a vague manner, by other inquirers among the Greeks and Romans, and was revived in modern times; but it was regarded by the greater number of philosophers as a mere vulgar error, until so late as 1802, when Mr Howard, by an accurate examina-

tion of the testimonies connected with events of this kind, and by a minute analysis of the substances said to have fallen in different parts of the globe, proved the authenticity of the circumstance, and shewed that these meteoric productions differed from any other substance belonging to our earth; and since that period, a number of these phenomena have occurred, and have been minutely recorded. Some of my readers, too, may perhaps recollect the various theories which were advanced with a view to account for this remarkable phenomenon; and there can be little doubt that the difficulty of explaining it upon intelligible and satisfactory principles, in this, as in other instances, prolonged the disbelief or the disregard of the fact.

I have hinted that the two last mentioned examples may be regarded as pretty apposite illustrations of the fate which has hitherto attended Animal Magnetism. It has been asserted by some individuals, little conversant with the subject, that the facts of Animal Magnetism are new,—that the pretended discovery is altogether of recent origin. This assertion, even if it were true, would be a matter of no earthly consequence, because it could have no effect in invalidating the evidence of the existence of the phenomena. But it is not only unimportant, but demonstrably false, as will be seen hereafter. Many of the most important facts



alluded to appear to have been well known to the ancients ; they may be traced among different nations and in remote times ; and they have been referred to and reasoned upon by several old authors, although it is only at a recent period, indeed, that men of science have condescended to devote to them an attention commensurate with their value.

We have thus seen that many things which were, for a long time, treated as fabulous and incredible, have, at length, been proved to be authentic facts, as soon as the evidence in support of them was duly subjected to scientific investigation, and the requisite experiments, when possible and necessary, were made with a view to ascertain their truth. We have seen that, in the case of meteoric stones, more than 2000 years elapsed between the first recorded observation of the phenomenon and the ultimate confirmation and general recognition of the fact. Do not these examples teach us that an obstinate scepticism, and neglect of adequate investigation, are quite as detrimental to the progress of scientific discovery, as an excess of credulity without due inquiry ? For, if we adopt the unphilosophical principle of rejecting, and at once without examination or inquiry, all facts which appear to us to be extraordinary, inexplicable, and mysterious, and which have not happened to fall immediately under our own limited observation, we place ourselves precisely in

the same predicament with that Indian Prince, who, relying exclusively upon his own experience, and probably conceiving that it was quite impossible for any thing to exist of which he was ignorant, denied the possibility of the production of ice by the freezing of water, and treated all accounts of the phenomenon as apocryphal, fabulous, and utterly unworthy of credit. We are informed that, in more recent times, another sage Indian potentate, in the same spirit, imagined that a certain European traveller was actually sporting with his credulity, when he was merely attempting to give him an accurate description of the steam-engine.

It may be reasonably maintained that, in the sciences of Physiology and Psychology, as in others, one important fact, when well established, is of infinitely more value than hundreds of the most brilliant but baseless hypotheses; and nothing can be more irrational than to attempt to ridicule or depreciate a well authenticated fact, either because we are incapable of accounting for it, or because it appears, *a priori*, to be inconsistent with some received theory. "Concerning the publication of novel facts," says the late celebrated Sir H. Davy, "there can be but one judgment, for facts are independent of fashion, taste, and caprice, and are subject to no code of criticism; they are more useful, perhaps, even when they contradict, than when

they support received doctrines ; for our theories are only imperfect approximations to the real knowledge of things."

Theories, indeed, have been pretty justly described as " the mighty soap bubbles, with which the grown-up children of science amuse themselves, whilst the honest vulgar stand gazing in stupid admiration, and dignify these learned vagaries with the name of science."\*

It may be stated as one of the many great advantages attending the study of Animal Magnetism, that it tends to approximate the sciences of Physiology and Psychology—the phenomena of the material and those of the spiritual man—by demonstrating, experimentally, the intimate connexion that subsists between them. The study of Physiology has of late been generally confined to an investigation of the component parts and mere material structure of the organism, with little or no regard to the principles which regulate their action in living beings. Psychological science, strictly so called, on the other hand, has been for a long time greatly neglected in this country, and its phenomena, even when they presented themselves to notice, have been almost entirely disregarded, although of paramount interest to every intelligent

\* SIR WILLIAM DRUMMOND ; *Academical Questions*.

living being, and of the utmost importance to the philosophy of man.\* This has probably arisen

\* I find the following striking, and, as it appears to me, extremely appropriate observations upon the present state of philosophy in England, in the *London Review* for April 1835 :

“ In the intellectual pursuits which form great minds, this country was formerly pre-eminent. England once stood at the head of European philosophy. Where stands she now ? Consult the general opinion of Europe. The celebrity of England, in the present day, rests upon her docks, her canals, her railroads. In intellect, she is distinguished only for a kind of sober good sense, free from extravagance, but also void of lofty aspirations ; and for doing all those things which are best done where man most resembles a machine, with the precision of a machine. Valuable qualities, doubtless ; but not precisely those by which man raises himself to the perfection of his nature, or achieves greater and greater conquests over the difficulties which encumber his social arrangements. Ask any reflecting person in France or Germany his opinion of England ; whatever may be his own tenets—however friendly his disposition to us—whatever his admiration of our institutions, and even his desire to introduce them into his native country ;—however alive to the faults and errors of his own countrymen—the feature which always strikes him in the English mind, is the absence of enlarged and commanding views. Every question he finds discussed and decided on its own basis, however narrow, without any light thrown upon it from principles more extensive than itself ; and no question discussed at all, unless Parliament, or some constituted authority, is to be moved to-morrow, or the day after, to put it to the vote. Instead of the ardour of research, the eagerness for large and comprehensive inquiry, of the educated part of the French and German youth, what find we ? Out of the narrow bounds of mathematical and physical science, not a vestige of a reading and thinking public, engaged in the investigation of truth, *as truth*, in the prosecution of thought for the sake of thought.

from the peculiar direction which has been given to the study of nature. We are generally taught to investigate only the materiality and mechanism of things, without paying much regard to those immaterial—or rather, those invisible, intangible and imponderable—forces, which are incessantly active throughout the universe, and are the mainsprings of the vital organization. Even in Physics, however—a science more immediately conversant with matter and mechanism—we dare not overlook the perpetual operation of these important powers, although we should never be enabled to ascertain

Among no class, except sectarian religionists—and what they are we all know—is there any interest in the great problem of man's nature and life: among no class whatever is there any curiosity respecting the nature and principles of human society, the history or the philosophy of civilization; nor any belief that, from such inquiries, a single important practical consequence can follow. Guizot, the greatest admirer of England among the continental philosophers, nevertheless remarks, that, in England, even great events do not, as they do every where else, inspire great ideas. Things, in England, are greater than the men who accomplish them."

In the preceding representation, it is to be feared there is but too much truth. In England, the very name of science is perverted, and the epithet of philosopher is almost exclusively conferred upon the mathematician, the chemist, and the mechanic. Upon the Continent, England, in the present day, is not considered as holding any high rank in the scale of intellectual pursuit; and for one work which issues from the British press in the course of a year, on any subject connected with the science of mind, probably twenty make their annual appearance in France and Germany.

the principles of their action. As Dr Rogie observes in his treatise on Electricity, " besides the well-known mechanical forces which belong to ordinary ponderable matter, the phenomena of nature exhibit to our view another class of powers, the presence of which, although sufficiently characterised by certain effects, is not attended with any appreciable change in the weight of the bodies with which they are connected. To this class belong Heat, Light, Electricity, and Magnetism." And with still more immediate reference to our present subject, M. Buffon, when treating of the sympathies that exist between the different parts of the living organism, remarks, that " the correspondence which certain parts of the human body have with others very different and very distant..... might be much more generally observed ; but we do not pay sufficient attention to effects, when we do not suspect their causes. It is undoubtedly for this reason that men have never thought of carefully examining these correspondences in the human body, upon which, however, depends a great part of the play of the animal machine.....A great many of these might be discovered, if the most eminent physicians would turn their attention to that study. It appears to me that this would be, perhaps, more useful than the nomenclature of anatomy.....The true springs of our organization are, not these

muscles, these arteries, these nerves, which are described with so much care and exactness: there reside, as we have said, internal forces in organised bodies, which do not follow the laws of that gross mechanical system which we have invented, and to which we would reduce every thing. Instead of attempting to obtain a knowledge of these forces from their effects, men have endeavoured to banish even the idea of them, and to exclude them from philosophy. They have, however, re-appeared, and with more *eclat* than ever, in the principle of gravitation—in the chemical affinities—in the phenomena of electricity, &c. But, notwithstanding their evidence and their universality—as they act internally, as we can only reach them by means of reasoning, as, in a word, they elude our vision, we admit them with difficulty: we always wish to judge by the exterior; we imagine that this exterior is all; it appears that we are not permitted to penetrate beyond it, and we neglect all the means which might enable us to approach them.

“ The ancients, whose genius was less limited, and whose philosophy was more extended, wondered less than we do at facts which they could not explain: they had a better view of Nature, such as she is; a sympathy, a singular correspondence, was to them only a phenomenon, while to us it is a paradox, when we cannot refer it to our pre-

tended laws of motion : they knew that Nature operates by unknown means the greater part of her effects ; they were fully convinced that we cannot enumerate these means and resources of Nature, and that, consequently, it is impossible for the human mind to limit her, by reducing her to a certain number of principles of action and means of operation ; on the contrary, it was sufficient for them to have remarked a certain number of relative effects of the same order, to justify them in constituting a cause.

“ Let us, with the ancients, call this singular correspondence of the different parts of the body a Sympathy, or, with the moderns, consider it as an unknown relation in the action of the nervous system : this sympathy, or this relation, exists throughout the whole animal economy ; and we cannot too carefully observe its effects, if we wish to perfect the theory of medicine.”

Thus far Buffon.—It is unquestionably true, that, in modern times, at least, and especially in this country, far too little attention has been hitherto paid to the spiritual nature of man—to the effects of those immaterial and invisible influences, which, analogous to the chemical and electric agents, are the true springs of our organization, continually producing changes internally which are externally perceived, as the marked effects of unseen causes,



and which cannot be explained upon the principles of any of the laws of mechanism: and it adds no small value to the study of Animal Magnetism, that it has brought pretty fully to light a most interesting class of phenomena, heretofore little investigated, a knowledge of which is essentially necessary to the perfection, not of Medicine only, but of Philosophy in general.

The medical student applies himself to the study of Anatomy, and endeavours to acquire a competent knowledge of the different parts of the human body—of the bones, and joints, and nerves, and muscles—of the thews and sinews of a man—in short, of the mere animal mechanism; and this is indispensable to the skilful exercise of his future profession. He turns to Physiology, and seeks to become acquainted with the uses and functions of the various portions of the material structure; and this, too, is essentially necessary. Chemistry, *Materia Medica*, Pathology, &c. are also necessary acquisitions. But a great deal more than this is requisite to constitute an accomplished physician. X He must study profoundly the various sympathies and susceptibilities of the human frame—its capability of being affected, in various ways, by those imperceptible physical and moral influences, whose existence is constantly manifested in the living body, but which we should in vain attempt to detect

or trace in the inanimate subject. All truly eminent physicians have admitted the high importance of this last species of knowledge, and the success of their professional practice has mainly depended upon its skilful application. Yet it is certain, that, for more than a century, men of science have betrayed a strange indisposition towards all investigations of this nature—an obstinate scepticism with regard to the results of all such inquiries, and a propensity to disparage and ridicule the labours of those who are engaged in them. So far, indeed, has this spirit of hostility been carried, that individuals pretending to discovery in this department of science might esteem themselves fortunate, if, along with the depreciation of their pursuits, and the ridicule of their alleged facts, they were not also denounced and persecuted as worthless, or even noxious impostors. Of such persecution there are abundant instances in the history of all incorporated academies and colleges.

When Mesmer first commenced the magnetic practice—of the efficacy of which he had, perhaps accidentally, made the discovery—at Vienna, he was immediately assailed by a virulent persecution on the part of the medical faculty, which eventually drove him from that city. The same hostile spirit pursued him into France. It was in vain that he succeeded in curing the most obsti-

nate diseases by processes until then unknown or disregarded, and by means apparently inadequate; —it was in vain that he boldly published authentic reports of his cures; it was in vain that some of his most respectable patients attested the reality of these cures. The whole faculty, instead of calmly investigating the matter, rose up in arms against this single unprotected stranger, denied the success of his practice in the face of the most positive and irrefragable evidence, loaded him with every imaginable species of calumny and abuse, loudly accused him of jugglery, and proclaimed him a quack and an impostor, although himself a regularly graduated physician. It was conceived to be highly presumptuous in any member of the medical profession to pretend to cure diseases according to a method not recommended, or sanctioned, or even known, by the faculty; and, unfortunately for their victim, the words *Animal Magnetism* were not to be found in the *Materia Medica*. The patrimony of the college was in danger, and the heretic disciple of Æsculapius must be put down by all means.

There is probably no instance, however, in which a real and valuable discovery has been ultimately suppressed by methods so violent and irrational as this. Mesmer persevered—made a few learned converts, who shared the persecution inflicted upon their master—bid defiance to all the malice of

his enemies, and gallantly maintained his ground against the united efforts of incorporated power, of learning, argument, wit, ridicule, falsehood, and invective. The result—at least so far as posterity is concerned—was such as it were to be hoped might always be the case when truth is opposed by oppressive authority, as well as by despicable arts and manœuvres. In vain did the French Academicians of that day attempt to stifle the embryo discovery. *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit.* The seed had been abundantly sown in fertile soil—the plant grew up healthy and vigorous—the number of labourers daily increased—the fruit arrived at maturity, and the harvest was ultimately secured. After the retirement of Mesmer, indeed, the practice of Animal Magnetism—although generally discountenanced by scientific and professional men, and, for some time, apparently in abeyance—was still partially exercised in private by learned and unlearned individuals; and the extraordinary facts which were gradually brought to light, no less than the remedial efficacy of the treatment, at length forced complete conviction upon the minds of thousands. Several eminent physicians at last embraced the practice, and made great additions to the evidence in favour of the authenticity of a doctrine which now stands much too firmly to be in any danger of being shaken down

by the impotent efforts of an ignorant ridicule. Of late, it has been almost universally recognised upon the Continent, and it has claimed the attention, and obtained the countenance, of some of the most celebrated scientific societies in Europe. For several years, the Royal Academy of Berlin has openly encouraged the investigation, and assigned prizes to the best memoirs on the subject; and in the late report of the French Royal Academy of Medicine, Animal Magnetism is recommended as worthy of being allowed a place within the circle of the medical sciences. Indeed, it may be truly said, that the physician who is contented to continue in "happy ignorance" of its interesting phenomena, and of the results which may be legitimately deduced from them, wilfully relinquishes one of the most useful acquirements essential to his professional success, and neglects some of the most remarkable and most important discoveries of modern philosophical investigation.

" There are some secrets which who knows not now,  
Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps  
Of science, and devote seven years to toil."

The details to be submitted to the attention of the public in this publication, are partly physiological, partly psychological, and partly falling more immediately within the medical department of the-

rapeutics, or the method of curing diseases; and in order that my readers may be in some measure aware of the great interest and importance of the subjects to be discussed, I shall here take the liberty of premising a short and succinct account of the new views to be brought under their notice in each of these sciences respectively.

The science of Physiology professes to explain the functions of organised beings. Human Physiology relates to the animal, vital, or natural functions of the human organism.

This science is acknowledged by almost all who have made it the object of their researches to be in a very imperfect and unsatisfactory state; and this imperfection may, perhaps, be justly ascribed—as, indeed, it is directly attributed by many—to the circumstance, that most authors have appeared a great deal more anxious to establish some favourite theory or hypothesis of their own, upon certain points, than to devote themselves to an attentive, steady, and judicious generalization of the actual phenomena of Nature. A great proportion of the excellent work on *Life and Organization*, by that very eminent anatomist and physiologist, the late Dr John Barclay of Edinburgh, is occupied with an exposition and refutation of the fallacious theories of his predecessors. Mr How, the

author of a translation of Rudolphi's *Elements of Physiology*, very justly observes in his preface, that "the almost insuperable difficulties which have ever attended the compilation of an elementary work on physiology, are increasing almost daily. There are few authors who are not engaged in some favourite hypothesis, and thus the facts which come under their observation are seen through a false and deceitful medium." The testimony of Mr Lawrence, in his *Lectures on Physiology* (Lec. III.), is to the same effect. "In this," says he, "as in most other subjects, the quantity of solid instruction is an inconsiderable fraction of the accumulated mass;—a few grains of wheat are buried amid heaps of chaff. For a few well-observed facts, rational deductions, and cautious generalizations, we have whole clouds of systems and doctrines, speculations and fancies, built merely upon the workings of imagination, and the labours of the closet."

A great part of the evil probably arises from a propensity to the premature formation of theories and systems of science, which, in the course of time, are found inadequate to explain all the phenomena that occur; so that, when any new facts are discovered, the doors of science are closed against them, and they are at once rejected, not because they can be demonstrated to be false, but

because they are, or are supposed to be, irreconcilable with our preconceived notions.\*

Much, no doubt, has been done for this science, since Mr Lawrence gave the above description of the situation in which he found it; and the names of Sir Charles Bell, Bichat, Flourens, Magendie, his learned translator, Dr Milligan,† and others,

\* This propensity of the learned was frequently exposed and reprobated by Lord Bacon, as extremely detrimental to the progress of science:

Error est præmatura atque proterva reductio doctrinarum in artes et methodos, quod cum fit, plerumque scientia aut parum aut nihil proficit.—*De Augment. Scient.*

† I entertain all due respect for the microscopic observers of the animal economy, but they must learn to entertain a little more respect for such as take a more enlarged view of nature than themselves. The investigations of the former extend no farther than the mere structure and functions of the various organs; and all this is very good, and very useful to know. But man and other animals possess not only various organs, but also a moving power, a vital principle, without which these organs would be entirely useless. The microscopic observers, indeed, ridicule all inquiry into the manifestations of this principle, as absurd and useless. Yet I do not hesitate to affirm that any system of Physiology is incomplete, which excludes all consideration of these manifestations, which are phenomena of nature, and a fit subject for philosophical investigation. What should we think of the wisdom of that philosopher, who, in attempting to communicate an adequate idea of the operation of the steam-engine, should content himself with a mere description of its mechanism,—of its wheels and levers, and cylinders, and pistons,—keeping entirely out of view the moving power—the steam, and ridiculing all investigation into the nature, application, and phenomena of this power?

In the Preface to the first edition of M. Magendie's Com-



whose successful labours in this department of knowledge have been recently laid before the pub-

pendium of Physiology, the author sets out by observing, that his principal object in composing the work was "to contribute to the introduction of the Baconian method of induction into Physiological science;" and on the 89th and 90th pages of the fourth edition of Dr Milligan's Translation, there occurs the only reference which M. Magendie has been pleased to make to the subject of Animal Magnetism. It is as follows:—

"The professors of magnetism, and particularly those of Germany, speak a great deal of a sense which is present in all the others, which wakes when they sleep, and which is displayed more especially in *sleep-walkers*; those persons receive from it the power of predicting events. The instinct of animals is formed by this sense; and it enables them to foresee dangers which are near. It resides in the bones, the bowels, the ganglion, and the plexus of the nerves. To answer such reveries would be a mere losing of time."

This is all, so far as I have observed, that M. Magendie has condescended to say about Animal Magnetism; a ludicrously imperfect allusion to one of those hundred theories which have been put forth with a view to account for a certain class of phenomena. On the subject of the phenomena themselves he is quite silent. Now, I would just take the liberty of asking M. Magendie, in what part of the writings of Bacon he has found a single passage which, either directly or by implication, can warrant us in excluding from philosophy the consideration of any class of facts which have been established by incontrovertible evidence, and of the reality of which every intelligent man may satisfy himself by experiment and observation? Lord Bacon was not quite such a blockhead as some of his pretended disciples would make him.

In one of his notes to the work of M. Magendie, Dr Milligan observes that "*sleep-walkers* afford a most perplexing object of study." Now, surely that labour is not useless, that time is not misspent, which are occupied in attempting to unravel this perplexity, in the true spirit of the Baconian philosophy, by collecting and classifying the facts.

lic, will be honourably distinguished by posterity. But although much has been already done for this science, in the way of collecting materials for its future improvement, a great deal still remains to be performed, before it becomes capable of affording us a just and comprehensive insight into the human constitution, and the action, sympathies, and susceptibilities of the various parts of the vital economy. Some very interesting discoveries, indeed, have been made; but the attempts to generalize the facts discovered have been founded upon too limited an induction, and the theories which have resulted from these imperfect generalizations have consequently been too partial and exclusive. Hence we are still so far from having hitherto arrived at a knowledge of that important link which connects the phenomena of nature—mind and matter. To me, indeed, it is quite incomprehensible how the interesting inquiries of the enlightened professors of Animal Magnetism, upon the Continent, should have been so entirely overlooked and neglected in this country, and such a truly ludicrous, if not absolutely disgraceful, ignorance of the whole subject should still be allowed to prevail among professional men. Setting aside all theory, the various important and undoubted facts which have been brought to light by that practice, are not only exceedingly curious in themselves, but are,

moreover, calculated to open up many new views in physiological science, and to explain many obscure passages in the book of Nature. The multitude of these indisputable facts, now accumulated by the intelligent disciples of the doctrine, afford the most overwhelming answer to the reiterated, ignorant parrot-cries of quackery and imagination. Physicians of the very highest eminence have borne the strongest testimony to the reality and importance of this discovery, and have anticipated from it the most valuable accessions to their professional knowledge.\*

I am perfectly willing to agree with those who hold that all our knowledge ought to rest ultimately upon Physics†—a science which embraces, or

\* The name and reputation of the celebrated Dr Hufeland, Physician to the King of Prussia, is, or ought to be, well known to every professional gentleman in this country; and no one acquainted with the character and writings of this practical physician, will accuse him of any deficiency of scientific acquirements, or of any predisposition to enthusiastic feelings. I presume, then, that the opinions of a man so eminent, and in every respect so well qualified, will be allowed to have some weight even with those who are themselves indisposed to investigation, and prefer an indolent scepticism to the labour of enquiry. Now, in his illustrations of and additions to Dr Stieglitz's Ideas upon Animal Magnetism, Dr Hufeland observes. "We stand before the dawning of a new day for science and humanity,—a new discovery, surpassing any that has been hitherto made, which promises to afford us a key to some of the most recondite secrets of nature, and thus to open up to our view a new world."

† Is it necessary to remind any persons pretending to the cha-

ought to embrace, all nature. But our prevailing physical theories have been recently described, perhaps with too much justice, as “merely ingenious methods, of no other utility than to facilitate the calculation of results.”\* Hitherto the science of Physics has been unable to discover the element of motion, and now abandons the research as fruitless. Physiology, too, is ignorant of what *life* really is, and yet pretends to explain its phenomena; and Psychology, not knowing in what manner the spiritual faculties are united to the organization, is compelled to investigate the operations of the intellect, as if they were performed altogether independently of the body; whereas they are only manifested, in the ordinary state of existence, through the intermediate agency of the corporeal organs; and Nature nowhere exhibits to our visual perceptions a soul acting without a body.

Now, in the course of this volume, I shall have occasion to direct the attention of my readers to a

racter of philosophers, that the term *Physics* is derived from a Greek word (*φύσις*) signifying Nature? How, then, do they pretend to limit it to matter and mechanism? Are not the phenomena of Spirit as much a part of nature as those of Matter?

\* See *Essai de Physiologie Psychologique*, par C. Chardel. Paris, 1831. In a subsequent part of this volume, I shall take the liberty of laying the ingenious writings of this author more largely under contribution.

number of new and most important facts—facts, too, to which sufficient attention does not seem to have been paid, especially by medical men, in this country—relative to the more remarkable powers, sympathies, and susceptibilities of the human organism, and to the energies and occasional manifestations of the vital functions. These facts are clear and unambiguous in themselves, and their reality has been demonstrated by numerous and decisive experiments; they are consequently supported by the most unimpeachable evidence, and must ultimately, in my humble opinion, greatly modify, if not entirely change, the whole aspect of the science.\*

With regard to Psychology, or that science which treats of the nature and functions of the immaterial, or spiritual, or vital principle, which animates and governs the organism, I hope to be able to bring forward a numerous class of facts, of a character perhaps still more important, and certainly more interesting to science and to humanity.†

\* The microscopic philosophers need be under no alarm. Their labours are useful, and we respect them, and require only the same respect from them. The object of their investigations is matter,—ours is spirit, and the manifestations of spirit. Our paths are different, and why should we turn aside to quarrel with each other? The objects of science are sufficiently numerous to afford occupation to all, and sufficiently separated to prevent the necessity of perpetual collision.

† Our investigations, however, must not be confounded with those of the mere metaphysician. He dwells in the region of

It is a complaint as old, at least, as the days of Cudworth, that, in their psychological researches, most individuals seemed disposed to give an undue bias to the principles of materialism; and Bishop Berkeley asks, "Have not Fatalism and Sadducism gained ground during the general passion for the corpuscularian and mechanical philosophy, which hath prevailed for about a century?" The later facts and speculations of Lord Monboddo, otherwise calculated to revive the study of Spiritual Philosophy, appear to have made little or no permanent impression upon the minds of philosophers. There is no doubt, indeed, that, for a considerable period, our psychological theories have in general displayed a decided leaning towards materialism; they have too much disregarded the manifestations of the vital principle—the *vis motrix*,—and relied too exclusively upon the mere acts of the material organization, as if there were nothing else deserving investigation. Hence, by a very partial and perverse examination of human nature, many philosophers and physiologists were induced to conclude, that the soul—if indeed any such hypothetical being could be rationally presumed to exist—

abstract ideas, and endeavours to reduce these to the clearness of mathematical axioms; we are occupied with facts and observations tending to demonstrate, and, if possible, explain the manifestations of the spiritual principle; his proofs are logical; ours are derived entirely from experience.

was inseparably connected with the body—that it was the mere product or offspring of organization—that both grew up to maturity together, existed in indissoluble union, and perished at one and the same moment of time.\*

\* These opinions are very old; they are of Pagan, not of Christian, origin. The doctrine, with the reasons which led to the belief of it, is thus stated by Charles Blount, and subsequently plagiarised by other writers, in his Treatise entitled *Anima Mundi*.

“As first to behold the soul in its infancy very weak, and then by degrees with the body to grow daily more and more vigorous, till it arrived to its perfection, from which state together with the body it declined, till the decrepitude of the one and dotage of the other, made it seem to them probable that both should likewise perish together :

Gigni pariter cum corpore, et una  
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere mentem.”

Other ancient and modern poets have dilated upon the same idea. Thus Seneca, the Tragedian :

Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil.  
Mors individua est noxia corpori,  
Nec parcens animæ.  
Toti morimur, nullaque pars manet nostri.

And the same sentiment is re-echoed by Voltaire :

Est-ce la ce Raion de l'Essence supreme,  
Que l'on nous peint si lumineux ?  
Est-ce la cet Esprit survivant à nous meme ?  
Il naît avec nos sens, croit, s'affoiblit comme eux :  
Helas ! il perira de meme.

This doctrine was held by some of the Greek and other heathen philosophers ; it was maintained, amongst others, by the Jewish sect of the Sadducees, and it was embodied in what has been called the Arabian heresy. It seems to have originated from a want of due attention to the obvious and important dis-

✕ But the facts and observations I am about to submit to the serious consideration of my readers, in this volume, lead us to conclusions precisely the reverse of this, and are calculated, as I conceive, to demonstrate, incontrovertibly, the separate existence and independent activity of the soul of man; as well as its powerful influence over the corporeal organism; in short, that it governs, instead of being governed by, the body;\* and thus, by the most

inction between the merely physical and material, and the moral and spiritual nature of man, without which the various phenomena of the human constitution cannot be properly comprehended and explained. The doctrine, however, although certainly very ancient, never became generally popular, even in the heathen world. As Cicero observes, there always remained in the minds of men *quasi sæculorum quoddam augurium futurorum*, —an internal presentiment of immortality, which opposed a stubborn resistance to all the ingenious sophistry of atheism. The opinion, too, was always philosophically refuted, as often as it was seriously propounded in a tangible shape. It was attempted to be revived by many of the French philosophers and *esprits forts*, previous to the first revolution, and even infected some thinking people among ourselves. I trust, however, that we have no reason, at present, to express ourselves in the language of an old and learned writer: “Surely we are fallen into an age declining from God, in which many are fond of those things which lead us farthest from Him; and the rabble of atheistical epicurean notions, which have been so often routed, and have fled before the world, are now faced about, and afresh recruited, to assault this present generation.”—SIR C. WOLSELEY; *Unreasonableness of Atheism*, p. 37.

\* Spiritus intus alit; totamque infusa per artus  
Mens agitat molem.—VIRGIL.

Some of the ancient philosophers ascribed much greater in-



ample and irrefragable evidence, to set for ever at rest that apparently interminable controversy between the Materialists and the Spiritualists—that *quæstio vexata*, as it has been called—which has been the great opprobrium of philosophy, from the earliest dawn of science even to our own times.

This indeed is perhaps the most interesting discovery, in a scientific point of view, which has hitherto resulted from the investigations of the professors of Animal Magnetism—a study which, it will thus be perceived, is of the very highest importance, not to medical science only, but to general philosophy.

With regard to the therapeutic department of Animal Magnetism, it cannot be expected that I should enter at any great length into its details, beyond a mere enumeration of the conditions, a description of the processes, and a statement of their attested efficacy. A dry narrative of cases of treatment, and a still drier list of cures and failures—for both have been amply recorded—however acceptable to the gentlemen of the medical profession, could possess little interest for the general reader. With a reference, therefore, to the numerous works

fluence to the soul, as the poet, Spenser, has expressed their doctrine in the following couplet :

“ For of the soul the body form doth take ;

“ For soul is form, and doth the body make.”

in which these cases are to be found minutely recorded, it may be almost sufficient for me to observe at present, that, by means of a few apparently insignificant manipulations, or even by an energetic exercise of the volition, accompanied by a vehement desire to relieve the afflicted, diseases of the most inveterate and obstinate nature, which had previously baffled all the ordinary resources of medical skill, have been radically cured, or greatly alleviated, and the patient, according to the nature of the particular case, has been restored to perfect or comparative health and strength. This sanative efficacy of the processes might be demonstrated by the most ample and most satisfactory evidence. In the mean time I shall take the liberty of merely alluding to one or two facts.

The judicious Dr Wienholt of Bremen, a physician of great respectability, and in extensive practice, who had long been sceptical in regard to the alleged efficacy of the magnetic treatment, was at length induced by circumstances to make trial of it, and gives the following account of his own experience.

“It became every day more and more evident to me, that, in the phenomena produced by the magnetic treatment, there was manifested the influence of a hitherto unknown agent, and that it was impossible to ascribe them either to mechani-

cal excitation, or to moral effects, as their source. But I found a still more valuable and more interesting reward of my perseverance, in the successful and complete termination of many serious and inveterate diseases, where my art failed me, and I could derive no aid from it in future.

“The best encouragement I experienced was in the successful and radical cure of my own child, a boy near six years old. For some years he had been almost constantly in a complaining state, and afflicted with many ailments, especially of the stomach, which appeared to be of a spasmodic kind. At length, when he had attained his sixth year, he exhibited symptoms which led me to apprehend confirmed epilepsy; and now, as all my previous efforts had failed, I resorted to Magnetism, of the efficacy of which I had already acquired sufficient experience. His mother undertook the treatment. In a few days he became somnambulist, and manifested precisely the same phenomena, making allowance for his age, as other patients who have been placed in the same state. In a few weeks he was cured, continued subsequently free from all those spasmodic attacks, and is at this moment the model of a strong and healthy youth.

“The cases in which, during a series of years, I have either administered Animal Magnetism myself, or caused it to be administered by others,

amount *now* to between 75 and 80. By far the greatest number of these cases consisted of diseases in which I could obtain no relief, or, at the utmost, a very equivocal alleviation, from the ordinary medical treatment—diseases of various kinds, acute and chronic, nervous and other tedious complaints. Among the patients there were persons of every age, rank, and sex, married as well as unmarried. In the cases of several of these patients, no other phenomenon was observed but a state similar to sleep; in others, there was feverish excitement; in many there were disagreeable and painful feelings, and in not a few convulsions. These reactions either appeared singly, or, as in most cases, in combination. I had frequent opportunities, too, to observe the phenomenon of Somniloquism, with all its various shades and attributes; although this state has occurred much more seldom in my experience than it is said to have done in that of others. I have seen it in grown persons, as well as in children, in males as well as in females, in the married and in the unmarried. In many patients, however, Magnetism produced no perceptible symptoms, and the complaints abated during the process of manipulation, or the patients were restored to health by this treatment, without my being able to discover the cause. But not all of the magnetized patients

recovered. Many continued in the same state as before the treatment; others found only an alleviation of their sufferings; nay, some died. In some the cure was transient; several were only partially, but many were completely, cured."

In another passage, Wienholt adds: "Above all things, the competent judge will not overlook the nature and duration of the diseases which came under treatment. He will soon be convinced, that by far the greater part of the cases here reported fall under that class in which the skill of the physician usually fails, which our forefathers, therefore, designated by the significant name of *Scandala medicorum*, and which even our present physicians, notwithstanding all the boasted progress made in the healing art, have not been able to take out of that predicament."\*

Captain Medwin, in his Memoir of Shelley, the poet, informs us that "Shelley was a martyr to a most painful complaint, which constantly menaced to terminate fatally, and was subject to violent paroxysms, which to his irritable nerves were each

\* See the Preface to WIENHOLT'S *Heilkraft des Thierischen Magnetismus*, a work which I would earnestly recommend, as written with great sobriety and good sense, and by an eminent practical physician, to every student of Animal Magnetism. In his magnetic practice, Wienholt was assisted by the Drs Olbers, Heineken, Treviranus, &c. all of whom were perfectly satisfied of the efficacy of the treatment, and the reality of the phenomena.

a separate death." Captain Medwin continues, "I had seen magnetism practised in India and at Paris, and, at his earnest request, consented to try its efficacy. Mesmer himself could not have hoped for more complete success. The imposition of my hand on his forehead instantaneously put a stop to the spasm, and threw him into a magnetic sleep, which, for want of a better word, is called Somnambulism. Mrs Shelley and another lady were present. The experiment was repeated more than once.

"During his trances, I put some questions to him. He always pitched his voice in the same tone as mine. I inquired about his complaint, and its cure—the usual magnetic inquiries. His reply was, 'What would cure me would kill me' (alluding probably to lithotomy). I am sorry I did not note down some of his other answers. Animal Magnetism is, in Germany, confined by law to the medical professors; and with reason—it is not to be trifled with"....."It is remarkable, that, in the case of the boy Matthew Schwir, recorded by Dr Tritschler, the patient spoke in French, as Shelley in Italian. He improvised also verses in Italian, in which language he was never known to write poetry. I am aware that, in England, the phenomena of Animal Magnetism are attributed to the imagination. I only state those facts that may

perhaps shake the incredulity of the most sceptical."\*

I could easily adduce a host of other eminent and unimpeachable authorities upon this subject; but I am afraid of exceeding the limits I have pre-

\* A very curious instance of *improvisation* during the magnetic sleep will be found in a work on Animal Magnetism by Mr Baldwin, British Consul in Egypt.

In the Memoir referred to in the text, Captain Medwin adds that Shelley was afterwards magnetised by a lady, to whom he addressed some verses, supposed to have been spoken to himself by his female physician during the operation; and which, although carelessly thrown together, possess a good deal of that "wild and wondrous" charm, mingled with refined sensibility, which distinguishes the poetical effusions of that gifted but unfortunate genius.

“ THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT.

“ Sleep on! sleep on! forget thy pain;  
 My hand is on thy brow,  
 My spirit on thy brain,  
 My pity on thy heart, poor friend;  
 And from my fingers flow  
 The powers of health, and, like a sign,  
 Seal thee from thine hour of woe;  
 And brood on thee, but may not blend  
 With thine.

“ Sleep on! sleep on! I love thee not;  
 But when I think that he,  
 Who made and makes my lot  
 As full of flowers as thine of weeds,  
 Might have been lost like thee;  
 And that a hand which was not mine  
 Might then have chased his agony,  
 As I another's—my heart bleeds  
 For thine.

scribed to myself, and must therefore refer my readers to the subsequent parts of this work, and to the writings of those authors whom I shall have occasion to notice hereafter.

In concluding this Introduction, I again beg to be permitted to repeat, what I formerly observed, that I do not expect my readers to place implicit confidence in all the statements I shall have occa-

“ Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of  
 The dead and the unborn :  
 Forget thy life and woe ;  
 Forget that thou must wake for ever ;  
 Forget the world’s dull scorn ;  
 Forget lost health, and the divine  
 Feelings that die in youth’s brief morn ;  
 And forget me—for I can never  
 Be thine.

“ Like a cloud big with a May shower,  
 My soul weeps healing rain  
 On thee, thou withered flower ;  
 It breathes mute music on thy sleep ;  
 Its odour calms thy brain !  
 Its light within thy gloomy breast  
 Speaks like a second youth again.  
 By mine thy being is to its deep  
 Possess.

“ The spell is done. How feel you now ?  
 ‘ Better—quite well’—replied  
 The sleeper.—What would do  
 You good, when suffering and awake ?  
 What cure your head and side ?  
 ‘ ’Twould kill me what would cure my pain ;  
 And as I must on earth abide  
 Awhile, yet tempt me not to break  
 My chain.’ ”



sion to make, merely because I may have brought them forward as facts. I shall honestly lay before them the evidence in support of these statements, and thus endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to place them in a situation to judge for themselves. I assure the public that I am no proselytising enthusiast ;—I have no desire to make converts to any particular doctrine, but am anxious only to stimulate to inquiry, in order that truth, when ultimately discovered, may be duly acknowledged. In short, I do not call upon any of my readers to believe ; I merely solicit their candid attention, and humbly invite them to think, and investigate, and decide according to their respective convictions. A blind credulity, and an obstinate scepticism, are frequently both the offspring of ignorance, and both are equally injurious to our progress towards scientific truth.

With regard to myself, I expect neither fame nor fortune from literary or scientific labour ; I have no personal interest in the reality of the facts I am about to establish ; I am content to act merely in the humble capacity of a pioneer, and endeavour to clear the way for others more competent to the task, and more ambitious of the honours and rewards of successful investigation. Upon this occasion, however, I would remind all those who may approach the discussion of this interesting but in-

tricate subject, in the words of an old and ingenious English writer, the celebrated Dr Henry More —that “exquisite disquisition begets diffidence ; diffidence in knowledge, humility ; humility, good manners and meek conversation. For mine own part, I desire no man to take any thing I say upon trust, without canvassing. I would be thought rather to propound than to assert : But continually to have expressed my diffidence had been languid and ridiculous.”



## ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

Nihil compositum miraculi causa, verum audita scriptaque senioribus  
tradam.—TACITUS, *An.* xi. 27.



## AN INQUIRY, &c.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE name of *Animal Magnetism* has been given to that organic susceptibility which renders the nervous system of one individual capable of being affected, in various ways, by particular processes performed by another, especially when accompanied with faith, or, at least, a certain abandonment in the patient, and with an energetic effort of volition on the part of the operator. The same name is also employed to designate the processes themselves, by means of which the desired effects are sought to be produced.\*

\* The name, *Animal Magnetism*, has been by many considered improper, because it conveys no adequate idea of the nature and extent of the subject; and, also, because it seems to imply a questionable theory. This latter objection, indeed, has evidently misled many ingenious but superficial enquirers, who

This definition, however, applies only to the most ordinary manner in which the effects alluded to are most frequently developed. But the same or similar phenomena have been observed to occur, in a variety of instances, in consequence of the probable influence of certain organic or inorganic substances upon the living organism—nay, sometimes spontaneously, or without any apparently adequate cause; and as all these analogous phenomena are

seem to have conceived that they had demolished the whole doctrine, and invalidated the whole facts, when they had merely shewn, like the French Academicians, in 1784, that the existence of a *magnetic fluid* of this nature is an improbable hypothesis, and that, in the present state of our knowledge, we are not warranted in attributing the effects produced to any species of magnetism. But the name which Mesmer was originally induced to give to his discovery, in consequence of certain circumstances which shall be explained hereafter, could not now be changed without considerable inconvenience; nor is it, perhaps, desirable that it should. Several of the sciences, it may be observed, have long since out-grown the names by which they were at first designated: As an instance among many, the science of *Electricity* was originally so called from a Greek word signifying *Amber*. Whether the phenomena evolved during the processes practised by Mesmer and his disciples have any thing in them analogous to Magnetism, is to this day a moot point. The greater number of the practical magnetisers are decidedly of opinion that such an analogy does exist. But, really, this is a matter of comparatively little consequence. It is much easier to classify these phenomena, than to give an appropriate and entirely unobjectionable name to that department of science under which they fall to be arranged; especially so long as their cause is obscure or ambiguous. It is of more consequence to science, however, to collect and classify facts, than to stickle about names.

—*Res, non verba.*

conceived to depend upon the same principle, they have consequently been all included under one category.

This influence, from whatever cause it may be alleged to proceed, appears so very mysterious and inexplicable, and the effects said to have been produced by the processes employed seem so very extraordinary and unaccountable, that the greater part of physical philosophers, especially in these later times, have, without sufficient examination, generally regarded the whole subject, *prima facie*, with the utmost scepticism; and many uninformed persons, seduced by the prejudices of the learned, have not hesitated to treat it with unbounded ridicule.\* Nevertheless, it will be shewn in the se-

\* I might give many amusing specimens of this ignorant levity, but *cui bono*? Some will probably occur hereafter. To me they have completely demonstrated the truth of the French poet's observation:

Les plus grands foux sont ceux qui ne pensent pas l'être.

In the mean time, I must be permitted to express my regret that my friend, Professor Napier, in a late number of the *Edinburgh Review*, should have lent his countenance, and that of the publication over which he presides, to mere vulgar clamour, and affected to sneer at what he, or his contributor, is pleased to denominate "the *follies* of Animal Magnetism." I have no hesitation in telling Professor Napier, that he who attempts to hold up to ridicule a scientific subject, of which he is profoundly ignorant, has but small pretensions to the character of a philosopher. Indeed, I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment that a gentleman who once boldly undertook the task of expounding the philosophy of Bacon, should expose his utter igno-



quel, that manifest traces of the reality of this influence may be discovered in all ages and amongst all nations; it has always constituted an element of popular belief; it is supported by some striking

rance and contempt of its most elementary principle, by passing a condemnatory sentence, without previous investigation, upon a series of facts, entirely elicited by inductive enquiry;—facts, too, which attracted the serious attention of such men as La Place, Cuvier, Hufeland, Dugald Stewart, and many other eminent philosophers and physicians. Such conduct merits general reprobation; for when incompetent persons are permitted to erect themselves into judges and oracles in matters of literature and science, when adventitious circumstances afford them opportunities of influencing popular opinion, and when they proceed, at once, to decide upon the character and value of particular subjects, without condescending to enquire or having the capacity to comprehend, they only mislead others, become blind leaders of the blind, retard the progress of useful knowledge by discouraging investigation, and thus contribute to perpetuate the reign of prejudice, ignorance, and error.

*Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur.*

In a subsequent number of the same publication (October 1835, p. 240), it is said, with the same profound and deplorable ignorance of the subject:

“In the provinces, a believer in Animal Magnetism or German Metaphysics has few listeners and no encouragement; but in a place like London, they make a little coterie; who herd together, exchange flatteries, and take themselves for the apostles of a new gospel.”

Now, this may, perhaps, be thought a very smart sentence in the pages of a review; but, in the first place, it is quite clear that the writer knows just as much of German Metaphysics as he does of Animal Magnetism—that is, in fact, nothing at all of either; secondly, it is absolute nonsense in itself; and, thirdly, so far as it relates to Animal Magnetism, it is just the very reverse of the truth. The doctrines and practice of Animal Mag-

natural analogies ; it has been seriously maintained in the writings of many profound and ingenious philosophers ; and, during the last half century, its existence has been experimentally demonstrated by such ample and incontrovertible evidence, as precludes all rational doubt in the mind of every honest and intelligent inquirer.

When a series of experiments, however, has been instituted and successfully conducted, with the view of investigating the reality of certain alleged facts which are of comparatively rare occurrence, and consequently not immediately obvious to com-

netism were actually proscribed in Paris, Vienna, and other large cities,—proscribed even by the respective governments, at the instigation of the learned rabble. They were, for a considerable period, cultivated almost exclusively in the provinces : and it was there that by far the greater proportion of the overwhelming evidence was collected, which afterwards flowed back into the different capitals, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, &c., carrying conviction into the minds of many even of the most obstinate and prejudiced opponents. But it is unnecessary to dwell upon facts which are sufficiently well known to all who have enquired into the subject, with the view of rectifying the errors and misrepresentations of those who prefer an ignorant dogmatism to philosophical investigation. For my own part, I disclaim all connexion with any such coterie as that described by the critic, and of which I doubt the existence ; as well as all pretensions to the character of an apostle of any new gospel. At the same time, I assure the public, that not even the smartest sayings of the very smartest of Reviewers, shall ever deter me from investigating the phenomena of Nature, and endeavouring to diffuse the truths she reveals to the humble and conscientious inquirer.

mon observation, it is often exceedingly difficult to impress minds, hitherto unprepared for the reception of these particular truths, with an adequate conviction of the accuracy of the result, or of the value of the discovery. The difficulty, too, is greatly increased, when the phenomena evolved are remote from the ordinary paths of scientific inquiry; when they are of a nature to excite our wonder, rather than to satisfy our reason; and when they appear to baffle every effort to bring them under any ascertained general laws, or to subject them to the rules of any previously-recognised philosophical theory. In some instances, indeed, the very first aspect of the alleged facts is sufficient to insure their immediate rejection. There is always, it is true, an ample fund of credulity in the world, accompanied with a ready disposition to believe any thing that is new, and apparently marvellous, and incomprehensible. But it is not among the ignorant and the credulous that the true philosopher looks for a rational approbation of his labours, or for an accurate appreciation of the truth and the value of his discoveries. Even men of scientific and otherwise unprejudiced minds—whose opinions alone can confer credit upon the efforts of the philosopher—are naturally slow in yielding their assent to the reality of any series of singular phenomena, which do not fall immediately within

the sphere of their own habitual investigations, which seem inconsistent with the results of their previous acquirements, and of the conditions of whose existence they are yet necessarily ignorant. Nor is this caution perhaps prejudicial, in the end, to the interests of science, unless when it is allowed to degenerate into downright obstinacy, or becomes contaminated by the sectarian spirit of party. Unfortunately for science, however, there are few minds possessed of that philosophical energy, which enables them to divest themselves of all prejudice, and to welcome the evidence of truth, from whatever quarter it may approach them.\*

In all cases, however, where a class of extraordinary facts is presented to us for the first time, upon the evidence of others, which we ourselves have hitherto had no opportunity of examining, the rational means of arriving at a just conclusion respecting their reality, appear to be,—

1. To consider the nature of the subject, the

\* It has been hitherto the fate of Animal Magnetism, to have to contend not only with scientific prejudice, but with professional interest, with Academies of Sciences and Colleges of Physicians; in short, with all the great monopolists of learning and wisdom. In such circumstances, it is not a little surprising that it should have survived until the present day; nay, that it should recently have started up, like Antæus, from the earth, with renovated vigour. Its ultimate triumph, which is probably now not far distant, will afford a most striking proof of the innate and unconquerable force of truth.

number of the observations and experiments which have been made, and the analogy of the phenomena which have been observed to occur in similar circumstances.

2. To satisfy ourselves with respect to the general character, intellectual fitness, and consequent credibility of the witnesses.

3. To scrutinize the circumstances in which the various experiments were made, with a view to detect any possible sources of error.

4. To be assured of the precision and unambiguity of the facts themselves, of their dependence upon the same principle, and of the rational impossibility of referring them to more than a single cause; and,

5. If possible, to repeat, for our own satisfaction, or cause to be repeated in our presence by others, the experiments by which the phenomena have been elicited, and that in the same circumstances, and under the same conditions. \*

\* The strictest attention to this last requisite is absolutely necessary. Attempts have occasionally been made, by the opponents of the system, to throw discredit upon Animal Magnetism, in consequence of the alleged failure of certain injudicious experiments made by ignorant and unskilful persons. This is most unfair. Are we prepared to peril the reality of the phenomena of Chemistry upon the bungling experiments of some awkward novice, who is utterly destitute of all knowledge of the elementary principles of the science, and of the necessary conditions of successful manipulation? Do not our most eminent professors occasionally fail in producing the expected result?

By judiciously following these rules, every intelligent and candid enquirer may succeed in obtaining complete conviction ; whereas, he who declines to enquire is not entitled to decide.

In proceeding to the execution of the task I have undertaken in the present publication, however, I am quite aware that I may expose myself, in the eyes of some individuals, to the charge of drawing largely upon the credulity of my countrymen. For such a charge, indeed, I am fully prepared, and do not eschew it ; but, fortunately, I may share the burden with a numerous host of individuals of far higher attainments and scientific reputation than any to which I can pretend ; while I may hope to find the weight diminish, in proportion as knowledge extends. My sole object is to ascertain the truth in an important subject of inquiry ; and this can only be done by an examination of the evidence applicable to the different points of the case. And here I may take the opportunity of declaring, that I shall bring forward no facts, as such, unless they be sufficiently attested by men of unimpeachable veracity ;—men abundantly qualified by their scientific habits and attainments, by their perspicacity and cautious spirit of research, for investigating the reality of the circumstances which they profess to have witnessed ;—and who, besides, could have no motive for deception, no conceivable inte-

rest in the practice of imposition, or the propagation of falsehood;—even if the high respectability of their characters, and their responsibility towards the public, did not constitute a sufficient security against any suspicion of the kind. I may be allowed to add, that I have myself produced, and consequently witnessed, several of the phenomena described in the following pages, and that under circumstances in which no deception was possible; and the minute correspondence of the facts which have fallen under my own observation with those recorded in the experiments of more practised manipulators, induces me to place entire confidence in the evidence for those other phenomena which I have had no opportunity of verifying by direct experiment. My object, however, at present, is not so much to force conviction upon the unwilling minds of the careless, or the obstinately incredulous, as to solicit the earnest attention of the philosophically inquisitive to a subject of rational and most interesting inquiry; and, if possible, to excite a corresponding spirit of investigation amongst all the genuine and liberal friends of truth and science.

The reader is requested to observe, that no subject of questionable theory is now to be propounded to him. Our business, at present, is with mere matters of fact; and these matters of fact he must

admit or reject, either on the incontrovertible evidence of competent observers, hereafter to be adduced, or on the testimony of his own experience. All that is required of him is, that he shall bring to the investigation of the subjects to be submitted to his consideration, that candour of mind, and that perfect freedom from prejudice and prepossession, which we ought to preserve in all our researches after truth. Indeed, I would strongly recommend to all who apply themselves to the investigation of this subject, to abstain, in the mean time, from any attempt to explain the facts presented to their notice upon the principles of any preconceived theory, or of any theory whatever. It were best, in the present state of our knowledge, to confine ourselves to the observation and classification of the authenticated phenomena. It is the facts, and the facts alone, which ought to engage all our attention in the first instance; and these, as has been already observed, we are bound to admit or reject, upon such evidence as we conceive to be satisfactory, or unsatisfactory, in the peculiar circumstances of the case.

Moreover, I feel it indispensably necessary to warn the reader, again and again, against the absolute and precipitate rejection of any alleged fact, without adequate investigation, merely because it may appear to him to be extraordinary, unaccount-



able, improbable, incredible, or even miraculous \*; or because the means employed seem, at first sight, incapable of producing the particular effects. Let him remember that *le vrai ne'est pas toujours le vraisemblable*; that Nature is wonderful and inexhaustible in her manifestations, whilst our faculties of perception and comprehension are limited; and that there are many facts in science which we are compelled by evidence to admit, although we are unable to discover the principle which is active in their production. What do we know, for example, of the real cause of the phenomena of mineral magnetism, of electricity, of galvanism, of gravitation;—of the susceptibility of disease in the animal organization;—of infection;—of the salutary operation of many medicinal drugs, &c. ? If no facts, indeed, were to be admitted in science, but such as could be immediately traced to a certain and satis-

\* “ Les miracles sont selon l'ignorance en quoi nous sommes de la nature, non selon l'estre de la nature.

“ Il ne faut pas juger ce qui est possible et ce qui ne l'est pas selon ce qui est croyable ou incroyable a notre sens; et est une grande faute, en laquelle la plupart des hommes tombent, de faire difficulté de croire d'autrui ce qu'eux ne sauroient ou ne voudroient faire.”—MONTAIGNE.

A celebrated philosopher (Bayle) has said with reason: “ On ne prescrit point contre la verité par la tradition generale, ou par le consentement unanime des tous les hommes.” Another sage (Averroës) had previously declared, that “ a whole army of doctors was not capable of changing the nature of error, and of converting it into truth.”

factory principle as their cause, our whole knowledge would be confined within exceedingly narrow bounds. \*

X \* " In every scientific investigation, it must be kept in mind, that efficient causes are beyond our reach. The objects of our research are physical causes only, by which we mean nothing more than the uniform sequences of events, as ascertained by extensive observation. What we call the explanation of phenomena, consists in being able to trace distinctly all the links of such a chain of sequences, so as to perceive their uniform relation to each other. Thus, there may be many instances in which we are acquainted with facts forming part of such a chain, and are satisfied that they are so connected, while we cannot explain their connexion. This is occasioned by the want of some fact which forms an intermediate part of the chain, and the discovery of which would enable us to see the relation of the whole sequence, or, in common language, to explain the phenomena. Such a chain of facts was, at one time, presented by the rise of water in a vacuum to the height of thirty-two feet. The circumstances were well known, as well as their uniform relation, that is to say, the fact of a vacuum — the fact of the water rising—and the fact of this uniformly taking place. But the phenomenon could not be explained; for an intermediate fact was required to show the manner in which these known facts were connected. The doctrine of nature abhorring a vacuum afforded no explanation, for it furnished no fact; but the fact required was supplied by the discoveries of Torricelli on atmospheric pressure. The chain of events was then filled up, or, in common language, the phenomenon was accounted for.

" There are, indeed, many cases in which the investigation of intermediate events in the chain of sequences is beyond our reach. In these, we must be satisfied with a knowledge of the facts, and their actual connexion as we observe them, without being able to trace the events on which the connexion depends. This happens in some of the great phenomena of Nature, such as gravitation and magnetism. We know the facts, but we can-

I may here observe, that the most eminent philosophers—those who have made the most profound researches into the laws and operations of Nature—are generally the most disposed to speak with becoming modesty of such facts as they themselves have had no opportunity of investigating, and of which they can only judge from the evidence of others, and from known analogies. In proof of this, I may refer to the following remarks of the most illustrious disciple of Newton, which are peculiarly applicable upon the present occasion. The celebrated M. de Laplace, in his *Essai sur les Probabilités*, observes, that “ of all the instruments we can employ, in order to enable us to discover the imperceptible agents of nature, the nerves are the most sensible, especially when their sensibility is exalted by particular causes. It is by means of them that we have discovered the slight electricity which is developed by two heterogeneous metals. The singular phenomena which result from the extreme sensibility of the nerves in some individuals, have given birth to various opinions relative to the existence of a new agent, which has been denominated *Animal Magnetism*, to the action of the common magnetism, to the influence of the

not account for them ; that is, we are ignorant of certain intermediate facts, by which those we do know are connected together.”—ABERCROMBIE, *Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers*, 4th edition, pp. 413–415.

sun and moon in some nervous affections, and, lastly, to the impressions which may be experienced from the proximity of the metals, or of a running water. It is natural to suppose, that the action of these causes is very feeble, and that it may be easily disturbed by accidental circumstances; but because in some cases it has not been manifested at all, we are not entitled to conclude that it has no existence. We are so far from being acquainted with all the agents of nature, and their different modes of action, that it would be quite unphilosophical to deny the existence of the phenomena, merely because they are inexplicable in the present state of our knowledge. It becomes us, however, to examine them with an attention the more scrupulous, in proportion as we find it more difficult to admit them; and it is here that the calculation of probabilities becomes indispensable, in order to determine to what degree we ought to multiply our observations and experiments, with a view to obtain, in favour of the agents which they seem to indicate, a probability superior to the reasons we may have for rejecting them."

The late justly celebrated Baron Cuvier, too, (an authority not to be treated lightly in a matter of this kind) has, in the second volume of his *Ana-*

*tomie Comparée*, expressed his opinion, in regard to Animal Magnetism, in the following terms :—“ I must confess that it is very difficult to distinguish the effect of the imagination of the patient from the physical effect produced by the operator. The effects, however, which are produced upon persons already insensible before the commencement of the operation, those which take place in others after the operation has deprived them of sensibility, and those which are manifested by animals, do not permit us to doubt that the proximity of two animated bodies, in certain positions and with certain motions, has a real effect, independently of all participation of the imagination of one of them. It seems sufficiently evident too, that these effects are owing to some sort of communication which is established between their nervous systems.”

I shall have occasion hereafter to refer to the opinions expressed upon this subject by the late Professor Dugald Stewart, and by other eminent philosophers and physicians. In the mean time, I may observe, that the foregoing specimens of philosophical judgment present a striking contrast to the supercilious, disingenuous, and irrational methods by which the greater number of the antagonists of Animal Magnetism have attempted to discredit the discoveries of the professors of that doc-

trine, and to discourage and ridicule all inquiry into its phenomena.\*

\* In an annotation on Southey's *Life of Wesley*, the Methodist, the late ingenious Mr Coleridge has left us the following curious record of his opinion of Animal Magnetism. It is pretty much what we might have expected from such a man of independent thought and inquiry, who had derived some knowledge of the subject from books and conversation, but was practically unacquainted with it.

Mr Coleridge remarks, that "the coincidence throughout of all these methodist cases with those of the magnetists, makes me wish for a solution that would apply to all. Now, this sense or appearance of a sense of the distant, both in time and space, is common to almost all the *magnetic* patients in Denmark, Germany, France, and North Italy, to many of whom the same or a similar solution could not apply. Likewise, many cases have been recorded at the same time, in different countries, by men who had never heard of each other's names, and where the simultaneity of publication proves the independence of the testimony. And among the magnetisers and attesters are to be found names of men, whose competence in respect of integrity and incapability of intentional falsehood is fully equal to that of Wesley, and their competence in respect of physio-psychological insight and attainments, incomparably greater. Who would dream, indeed, of comparing Wesley with a Cuvier, Hufeland, Blumenbach, Eschenmeyer, Reil, &c.? Were I asked what I think, my answer would be,—that the evidence enforces scepticism and a *non liquet*;—too strong and concurrent for a candid mind to be satisfied of its falsehood, or its solvibility on the supposition of imposture or casual coincidence; too fugacious and unfixable to support any theory that supposes the always potential, and under certain conditions and circumstances, occasionally active, existence of a correspondent faculty in the human soul. And nothing less than such an hypothesis would be adequate to the *satisfactory* explanation of the facts; though that of a *metastasis* of specific functions of the nervous energy, taken in conjunction with extreme nervous excitement, *plus* some delusion, *plus* some illusion, *plus* some

“The essential point,” says Nicole, after Aristotle, “when any question arises respecting facts that are extraordinary and difficult to conceive, is, not to demonstrate how they exist, but to prove that they do exist.”\* “We must not decide,” says Father Lebrun, “that a thing is impossible, because of the common belief that it cannot exist; for the opinion of man cannot set limits to the operations of nature, or to the power of the Almighty.”†

There is no doubt that, when phenomena of an extraordinary character are presented to us for the first time, to which we can perceive nothing ana-

imposition, *plus* some chance and accidental coincidence, might determine the direction in which the scepticism should vibrate. Nine years has the subject of Zoo-Magnetism been before me. I have traced it historically, collected a mass of documents in French, German, Italian, and the Latinists of the sixteenth century, have never neglected an opportunity of questioning eye-witnesses, *ex. gr.* Tieck, Treviranus, De Prati, Meyer, and others of literary or medical celebrity, and I remain where I was, and where the first perusal of Kluge's work had left me, without having moved an inch backward or forward. The reply of Treviranus, the famous botanist, to me, when he was in London, is worth recording:—*Ich habe gesehen was (Ich weiss das) Ich nicht würde geglaubt haben auf ihren Ersählung, &c.*—‘I have seen what I am certain I would not have believed on *your* telling; and in all reason, therefore, I can neither expect nor wish that you should believe on mine.’—COLERIDGE; *Table-Talk*, vol. i. pp. 107, &c.

\* NICOLE; *Oeuvres*, tom. vii. let. 45, p. 238.

† *Hist. Crit. des Superst.* l. i. ch. 7.

logous in our previous knowledge, it is quite natural that we should require much stronger evidence to convince us of their reality, than in the case of facts of more ordinary occurrence, and of easier explanation.\* Here, indeed, it is the duty of the philosopher to proceed with great caution, and to suspend his belief until he shall have obtained evidence of a character and weight sufficient to satisfy his judgment, and to remove every reasonable doubt. But when such satisfactory evidence has once been obtained, we can no longer continue to withhold our assent, without totally abandoning the use of our reason, and surrendering our minds to the perverse dominion of an irrational scepticism.

\* " In the acquisition of facts, we depend partly upon our own observation, and partly on the testimony of others. The former source is necessarily limited in extent, but it is that in which we have the greatest confidence ; for, in receiving facts on the testimony of others, we require to be satisfied, not only of the veracity of the narrators, but also of their habits as philosophical observers, and of the opportunities which they have had of ascertaining the facts. In the degree of evidence which we require for new facts, we are also influenced, as was formerly stated, by their probability, or their accordance with facts previously known to us ; and, for facts which appear to us improbable, we require a higher amount of testimony, than for those in accordance with our previous knowledge. This necessary caution, however, while it preserves us from credulity, should not, on the other hand, be allowed to engender scepticism ; for both these extremes are equally unworthy of a mind which devotes itself with candour to the discovery of truth."—*ABERCROMBIE ; Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers*, p. 378.



## CHAPTER II.

**THE** effects which are alleged to have been produced through the influence of that agent which has been denominated Animal Magnetism, appear to have hitherto excited little sensation in this country, excepting as an occasional subject of ridicule. In the case of persons who have never made any serious inquiry into the subject, the very extraordinary, and apparently mysterious and unaccountable, character of the facts, so startling upon a first view, might almost justify the derision with which they invariably seem disposed to treat them. But he who once enters into a sober investigation of these facts, and becomes, in some degree, aware of their number, their universality, the conditions under which they occur, their analogy with each other, and the superabundant evidence which exists in favour of their reality, must soon perceive that they merit more serious attention. During the last half century, numberless experiments have been made upon the Continent, especially in France and Germany (where, indeed, the practice has now

been pretty generally introduced), and a vast variety of cases, of the most remarkable character, witnessed and recorded, which, if we consider them, as they seem entitled to be considered, as well authenticated, will be at once admitted to be of a highly important nature, whether we regard them merely in a medical point of view, or look upon them as a most interesting and valuable accession to our physiological and psychological knowledge. These experiments, too, have been conducted, not by ignorant empirics alone,\* as is too generally supposed, but chiefly, as will be seen in the sequel, although not limited to them, by professional gentlemen of learning, talents, and high respectability, whose characters hold out sufficient security against all suspicion of deception, even supposing that, in

\* It is frequently thrown out as a reproach to Animal Magnetism, that it was, at one time, practised principally by empirics and unprofessional persons. The fact is, in some degree, true, but the reproach is altogether unmerited. It will be seen hereafter, that Animal Magnetism was prohibited; that the doctrine was condemned, and its most enlightened advocates persecuted by the profession; and it was natural enough that the practice should have fallen into other hands. The reproach might, with far greater justice, be directed against those who, although they ought to have been the best qualified for the investigation, neglected the opportunity of extending and improving the discovery, and of rendering it more and more useful to science and to humanity. Throughout the entire annals of scientific discovery, we meet with nothing more mean-spirited, narrow-minded, and disgusting, than the conduct of the Faculty of Medicine towards Mesmer and his disciples.

the particular circumstances, there existed any motive for deception, or that it had been practicable, or had been actually attempted.

Before I proceed to the history of this interesting discovery, and to describe the various remarkable phenomena which have been brought to light by the magnetic treatment, I conceive it may be useful to advert briefly to certain curious opinions and customs, which have prevailed, almost universally, among mankind, in all ages of the world, and therefore would appear to have some probable foundation in nature. In what degree they may be held to be connected with the doctrine of Animal Magnetism, to be afterwards explained, I may leave to the judgment of my readers.\*

\* I understand that the facts I stated, and the observations I took the liberty of making upon these matters of popular faith, in the first edition of this volume, have called forth a vast deal of merriment among the wisecracks and wittlings in certain quarters (I wish I could make them at once merry and wise); and I have myself heard an infinite number of jokes—a few good, many bad, and some indifferent—sporting in relation to this and other subjects connected with the study of Animal Magnetism.

Now, I do not in the least regret that I have thus furnished a rattle to amuse these half-grown-up children of science; most willingly would I leave them in the undisturbed enjoyment of their harmless and unmeaning mirth, provided I am permitted patiently to grope my way along the lowly paths of experience and observation, and to cast an humble but not an undiscerning eye upon all that I meet of the realities of nature. If we are desirous of making any assured progress in the study of the philosophy of man, we must not neglect those popular opinions,

There are various simple operations in almost constant practice among mankind, and performed, as it were, instinctively, which, from their very frequency and apparent insignificance, scarcely engage our attention, and consequently give rise to no reflection. We find, indeed, a number of floating opinions relative to the object and efficacy of some of these seemingly trifling operations, which have been transmitted from age to age, until they have at length been permitted to settle down and mingle with the elements of popular belief; but men of education and science, especially in this age of intellect, have generally agreed to regard all such practices with indifference, and to reject all such opinions with contempt, as the offspring of mere ignorance and prejudice. Upon due inquiry, however, it will probably be found, that Nature never confers a general instinct without having a

those habits of thinking, those instinctive principles and feelings, which Nature herself, for the wisest of purposes no doubt, seems to have originally implanted in the minds even of the rudest of mankind. These are frequently more valuable as materials for thought, more fertile in interesting results to the inquisitive mind, than all the airy speculations of a fanciful philosophy, and will be disregarded, despised, or derided only by the self-conceited and the wilfully ignorant.

I will therefore venture to take leave of these laughing philosophers in the words of St Austin: *Rideat me ista dicentem, qui non intelligit; et ego doleam ridentem me*—"Let them laugh at me for speaking of things which they do not understand; and I must pity them, while they laugh at me."

particular end in view ; and it is quite possible that these instinctive practices may have their special objects, and that the opinions alluded to may constitute the surviving relics of some rude branches of knowledge, cultivated in remote periods of society, which have been almost entirely swept away, and nearly obliterated from the records of human acquirements, leaving but a few faint traces of their former prevalence behind, in popular superstition, and the deeply-rooted prejudices of the vulgar.

In all ages, a certain medicinal virtue has been ascribed to the touch of the human hand, to the placing of it upon a sick person, or using it as a topical remedy, by rubbing with it any part of the body which may happen to have been injured. This fact is familiar to all of us from our infancy, although little attention appears to have been hitherto paid to this instinctive operation, and scarcely any attempt has been made to assign a reason for the soothing influence of the process.

Natural instinct prompts a patient to apply his hand to any part of his body in which he feels pain. If he should happen to have received a blow, or any local bodily injury, the hand instinctively moves towards the suffering part, and probably rubs it gently. In the same manner, in the case of a headach, a colic, &c. we naturally seek relief from the application of the hand to the region where

the pain is felt. In similar complaints, too, we frequently experience relief from the same operation performed by another, with the view of alleviating the painful sensation. This process is well known and appreciated in the nursery, where it is often resorted to by attendants upon children. When a child has been injured, or is otherwise suffering bodily pain, it usually runs to its mother or its nurse, who places it on her knee, presses it to her breast, applies her hand to the part affected, rubs it gently, and in many cases soothes the painful sensation, and sets the child asleep.

This process indeed appears to be sometimes adopted, not merely with the view of alleviating any particular painful sensation, but as a general corroborant and preservative of the health. In some parts of Bavaria, we are informed that the peasants regularly rub their children from head to foot, before putting them to bed; and they are of opinion that this practice is attended with salutary consequences. The mode of taking the bath among the Oriental nations, accompanied with friction, and pressing the different parts of the body (*champooing*), produces a refreshing, invigorating, and highly agreeable feeling, occasions a slight perspiration and gentle slumber, and cures, or at least alleviates, many diseases. In investigating the customs of different countries, we sometimes stum-

ble upon practices still more analogous to the magnetic processes. The author of the *Philosophie Corpusculaire* informs us, that a family exists in the mountains of Dauphiné, who have been in the habit of magnetising, from father to son, for centuries. Their treatment, he adds, consists in conducting the great toe along the principal ramifications of the nerves. Professor Kieser\* mentions that a similar mode of treatment (called *Treten*) has long prevailed in many parts of Germany, for the cure of rheumatic and other complaints. We have probably all heard of the virtue ascribed to the great toe of King Pyrrhus.

Long before the discovery, indeed, of what is now called Animal Magnetism, many eminent physicians appear to have been perfectly well acquainted with the efficacy of touching and rubbing, as a means of curing diseases. Nay, if we may credit the authority of the anonymous author of the *Denarium Medicum*, there were many ancient physicians who cured diseases without making use of any material remedies, and, as it would appear, in a manner purely magnetic, corresponding with that practised in the modern School of Barbarin. *Fuerunt*, says he, *ante Hippocratem multi viri docti, qui nulla prorsus medicina corporea usi sunt, sed sola spiritus et animae facultate.*

\* KIESER ; *System des Tellurismus*, &c. vol. i. p. 381, sect. 127.

Michael Medina, in his treatise *De recta in Deum fide*, cap. 7. (Venice, 1564), tells us that he knew a boy at Salamanca, who was believed to possess the gift of communicating health, and who cured many persons of the most serious diseases merely by touching them with his hand. Thiers, in his *Traité des Superstitions* (l. vi. ch. 4), mentions several monks who were in the practice of curing diseases by the touch. Athanasius Kircher asserts that there are some persons who cure the most obstinate diseases by the mere touch of the hand (*solo tactu incurabiles morbos tollunt quidam*). Pujol, in his work on *Trismus*, relates a curious circumstance which occurred during the treatment of a patient, who was afflicted with the disease called *Tic douloureux*. "Every paroxysm," says he, "terminated by the flowing of some tears from the eyes, and of some saliva from the mouth; but the patient was obliged to beware of attempting to dry her eyes and chin upon those occasions, because the slightest touch increased the acuteness and duration of the pain. In one of these attempts, she made the discovery, that when she slowly and cautiously approached the points of her fingers to the suffering part, the fit was much shortened. She was obliged, however, merely to reach the skin with the edge of her nails, to touch it as lightly and as rapidly as possible, and then to withdraw



them as fast as she could." In consequence of this superficial contact, she experienced a painful but merely momentary itching; upon which there immediately followed a sensation which she compared to the noise made by the wheels of a clock in striking the hour, and then the fit terminated.\*

Individuals have at various times appeared in this country, who have acquired considerable reputation for their skill in reducing obstinate swellings, and curing other diseases, principally of the joints, by means of friction and pressure; and these methods have also been frequently adopted in the cure of rheumatic complaints. But in such cases, the beneficial effects, it is believed, have generally been ascribed to the mere friction, and to the increased local excitement and activity of circulation thereby produced in the affected parts.

A peculiar and supernatural efficacy has been sometimes ascribed to the touch of particular individuals. Thus, in England and France, it was an old belief, that the monarchs of these kingdoms possessed the power of curing the scrofula (hence called the King's Evil) by means of the touch of

\* Pujol regarded Animal Magnetism as a chimera, and considered the effects of this manipulation as merely electrical. Wienholt, however, himself a physician, and one of the most sensible writers upon this subject, is disposed to look upon the matter in a different light, and recommends that the magnetic treatment should be tried in similar cases.

their hand. This power is said to have been first ascribed to Edward the Confessor, in England, and to Philip I. in France. The following was the formula adopted by the kings of France, in manipulating upon such occasions: *Le Roi te touche, Dieu te guerisse*. The same power is said to have been previously exercised by the Scandinavian princes, and particularly by St Olaf, who is supposed to have reigned from 1020 to 1035; so that this traditional efficacy of the royal touch appears to have originated in the north of Europe.\*

\* See Snorro Sturluson's *History of the Scandinavian Kings*.

That the Kings of England, for several hundreds of years, actually exercised their touch for the cure of scrofulous complaints, is proved by abundant historical authority; and the sanative efficacy of the process is also sufficiently attested.—See POLYDORE VIRGIL, lib. viii. *Hist. Angl.* 1; TOOKER, *Charisma, sive donum sanationis*, &c. 1597. Mr Wiseman, principal surgeon in King Charles First's army, and serjeant-surgeon to King Charles II. after the Restoration, says: "I myself have been a frequent eye-witness of many hundreds of cures performed by his Majesty's touch alone, without any assistance of chirurgery; and those, many of them, such as had tired out the endeavours of able chirurgeons before they came thither."—WISEMAN'S *Chirurgical Treatises*, vol. i. p. 387. See also Mr Beckett's *Enquiry into the Antiquity and Efficacy of Touching for the Cure of the King's Evil*. The method adopted upon these occasions was to accompany the touch with prayer, and to hang a gold medal about the neck of the patient.

Sir William Davenant, in his Tragedy of Macbeth, referring to the exercise of this power by Charles II. of England, observes:

"How this good King solicited Heaven  
Himself best knew: but strangely-visited people,

These circumstances, relative to the popular belief of the sanative efficacy of the touch of the human hand, accompanied, as we have seen, with some evidence of its reality, are certainly curious. I am aware that many of the writers upon Animal

The mere despair of surgery, he cured,  
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,  
Put on with holy prayers."

And that very eminent divine, Bishop Bull, assures us of the truth of this fact, in the following passage of his fifth sermon:—  
“That divers persons, desperately labouring under the King’s Evil, have been cured by the mere touch of the Royal hand, assisted with the prayers of the priests of our church, is unquestionable.”

It has been seen, that it was usual, upon these occasions, to hang a gold medal about the necks of the patients. To those who are in the habit of ridiculing the efficacy of charms, amulets, &c. I would recommend a serious consideration of the following case, which was related by Mr Dicken, serjeant-surgeon to Queen Anne, to a respectable physician. “A woman came to him, begging that he would present her to be touched by the Queen. As, from her appearance, he had no great opinion of her character, he told her the touch would be of little service to her, as he supposed she would sell her medal, which must continue about the neck to make the cure lasting. She promised to preserve it; was touched; had the medal given to her; and soon after her sores healed up. Forgetting her promise, and now looking upon the piece of gold as useless, she disposed of it; but, soon after, her sores broke out once more. Upon this she applied to Mr Dicken a second time, earnestly entreating him to present her again to the Queen. He did so, and once more she was cured.”—DOUGLAS, Bishop of Salisbury; *The Criterion*, p. 205.

An analogous anecdote is told by Deleuze, towards the conclusion of his *Defense du Magnetisme Animal*. “A Doctor of Medicine, who enjoys a high reputation, and who will not be accused of ignorance, for he is a Professor and a Member of the

Magnetism do not admit that there is much, if any, analogy between this mode of cure and the magnetic processes. I should not have conceived it proper, however, to have omitted all notice of the belief and corresponding practices alluded to; the more especially as, notwithstanding all the facts which have been brought forward, and the theories which have been propounded upon the subject, we are still confessedly very ignorant of the true causes which operate in producing the phenomena of Animal Magnetism; and it has never yet been correctly ascertained in how far these phenomena may depend upon the physical means employed, or upon the psychical influences which are exerted, or developed, during the treatment. The general, almost universal, prevalence of the popular belief respecting the existence of the influence in question, appeared to be a circumstance of too much importance to be passed over entirely without notice.\*

Academy of Sciences, declared to me that he knew a lady who was long afflicted with palpitations of the heart. She was advised to wear on her breast a hazel-nut, hollowed out, and then filled with mercury, and well stopped. As soon as she began to wear this amulet, the palpitations ceased. After a few days she thought herself cured, and laid aside the amulet. The palpitations returned; and the same thing took place during several years."

\* *Φήμη δ' ού τις πάμπαν ἀπέλλυται, ἢν τινὰ πολλοὶ  
λαοὶ φημίζουσι.*

*Fama vero nulla prorsus perit, quam quidem multi*

*Populi divulgant.*

*Hesiodi Opera et Dies, v. 761.*

Some of the writers upon Animal Magnetism have been induced to ascribe a great deal of influence to the human eye; and in this opinion, also, they appear to be supported by a very ancient and generally prevalent popular belief, which, in many instances, no doubt, may have degenerated into superstition. This belief, however, appears to have existed from the earliest times. Pliny informs us, in his *Natural History*, that a particular colour of the eye, and a double pupil (probably meaning a variously-coloured or spotted *iris*), were believed to indicate that the persons having this colour or conformation of the eye, were peculiarly endowed with this species of the magnetic virtue.\*

Of all the corporeal organs, there is none which can be considered so much in the light of an immediate and faithful interpreter of the internal thoughts, feelings, and emotions, as the eye. It is, as it were, at once the telescope and the mirror of the soul. Love, hate, fear, courage, jealousy, innocence, and guilt, are revealed by that powerful

\* “Esse, adjicit Isigonus, in Triballis et Illyriis, qui visu quoque effascinent, interimantque quos diutius intueantur, iratis præcipue oculis: quod eorum malum præcipue sentire puberes. Notabilius esse, quod pupillas binas in singulis oculis habeant. Hujus generis et fœminas in Scythia, quæ vocantur Bithyæ, prodit Apollonides: Philarchus, et in Ponto Thibiorum genus, multosque alios ejusdem naturæ; quorum notas tradit in altero oculo geminam pupillam, in altero equi effigiem.” And more to the same purport.—Plin. *Nat. Hist.* vii. 2.

and delicate organ; every species of passion, in short, is immediately portrayed in it; and there is probably no feature in the human countenance from which we are so much disposed to draw our inferences, and to form our opinions, respecting individual character. *Nec enim, says Wierius, ullum reperias in humani corporis fabrica organum, quod tanta spirituum copia scateat, et ex quo eorum fulgor usque adea emicet, ut de oculi pupilla certum est.\**

The force and fascination of the eye, indeed, have been always proverbial, and the common belief of the people has ascribed to this influence many of those phenomena which are included under the description of magic and witchcraft.† The baneful effects of the *evil eye* are recorded in the vulgar traditions of all ages and nations. Hence probably the derivation of the Latin word *Invidia*; and Virgil clearly alludes to the common superstition in his 30th Eclogue, v. 118:—

\* *De Præstigiis Daemonum*, lib. ii. c. 49.

† The mighty mind of Bacon did not disdain, like many of our physical philosophers of the present day, to grapple with this interesting subject. This great philosopher defines *fascination* to be “the power and act of imagination, intensive upon other bodies than the body of the imaginant.” The reality of this influence he does not seem disposed to deny; for, after remarking that the school of Paracelsus, and the disciples of natural magic, had too much exalted this power of the imagination, he observes, that “others, that draw nearer to probability, calling to their view the secret passages of things, and specially of

Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos.

According to the accounts of recent travellers, the Indians are to this day convinced that many diseases are generated merely by an evil look. In Captain Lyon's *Travels in Northern Africa*, it is observed, that among the Arabs, the *evil eye* is of all mischiefs the most dreaded; and for a stranger to express particular admiration of a child, a horse, or any other valuable, is to bring on it or its possessor misfortune, unless averted by passing over the object *a finger wetted with saliva*. \*

It has been asserted, and upon evidence, too, that the human eye manifests a powerful influence in subduing the natural courage and ferocity of wild animals, insomuch that bulls, tigers, &c. it is alleged, have been known to retire in dismay before the firm and fixed look of man. Some sin-

the contagion that passeth from body to body, do conceive it should likewise be agreeable to nature, that there should be some transmissions from spirit to spirit, without the mediation of the senses." After alluding to the means used "to raise and fortify the imagination," he concludes: "Deficiencies in these knowledges I will report none, other than the general deficiency, that it is not known how much of them is verity, and how much vanity;" in other words, that the subject had not yet been philosophically investigated.

\* As there are some who are said to fascinate by their aspect, so Rodericus a Castro (*Med. Polit.* l. 4. c. 1.), says: "E converso, quosdam esse quorum oculi creduntur habere vim beneficam ad res inspectas: vulgo *Bensedeiros*."

gular and almost incredible instances of this influence will be found in Van Helmont's *Treatise on the Plague*, and in other works. \*

The breath and the saliva have both been al-

\* See, in particular, *Secrets et Remedes éprouvés, dont les préparations ont été faites au Louvre, de l'ordre du Roi*, par M. L'Abbé Rousseau, &c. 2d edit. Paris, 1708.

I remember having read in a newspaper, some years ago, an account of the escape of a tiger from confinement, which caused great terror and confusion in the streets of London. A gentleman happening to come suddenly out of a house, without any previous knowledge or suspicion of his danger, found the animal couched within a few yards of him. Fortunately, this gentleman had spent some part of his life in the East Indies, and was acquainted with the nature of these ferocious animals. Instead of attempting to make his escape, he stood perfectly still, and fixed his eyes steadily upon the tiger, who, in the course of a few seconds, made a bound to the opposite side of the street, and soon left the gentleman in complete security.

I need make no apology for extracting the following very curious observations from a popular publication, entitled *Time's Telescope*, for 1832.

“ RECIPROCAL EFFECTS OF BETRAYING FEAR.

“ It is well known, that, with regard to most animals, the betrayal of fear in one often excites another to mischievous attacks, or, if these have been commenced, to increased boldness.” Van Helmont had, long ago, made a similar remark: “ *In omni duello, a pavore hostis conspicuo, animus hostilis roboratur.*” **TUMULUS PESTIS.** “ That this does not hold, as is usually supposed, in the case of bees, appears from a circumstance which occurred to M. de Hofer of Baden. Being a great admirer of bees, they appeared to have acquired a sense of friendship for him, by virtue of which he could at any time approach them with impunity, and even search for a queen, and taking hold of her gently, place her upon his hand. This was, as usual,



leged to possess considerable efficacy in the cure or alleviation of diseases. The remedial efficacy of the breath, indeed, appears to have been maintained in ancient times; for we find that Pliny recommends breathing upon the forehead as a means of cure.\* Peculiar virtue has, in all times, been ascribed to the breath of young and healthy per-

ascribed to his want of fear; but having had the misfortune to be attacked by a violent fever, he soon found, after his recovery, that the bees considered him as a different person, and instead of being received by them as an old friend, he was treated as a trespasser; nor was he ever able, after this period, to perform any operation upon them, or approach within their precincts, without exciting their anger. It would thence appear that it was not so much his want of fear and confidence in their want of enmity, as some peculiar effluvia of his body (changed by the fever), which gave rise to the circumstance.

“That the non-betrayal of fear, however, has a powerful influence upon quadrupeds, as well as upon man himself, there can be no doubt. We are acquainted with a gentleman who affirms that he is not afraid to face any animal, not excepting a lion, a tiger, or even a mad dog; and when in India, he gave actual proof of his courage, by killing, with his own hand, more tigers than one. His secret is to fix his eye firmly and undauntedly on the animal, a method which he maintains will cause the fiercest to quail. By the same means, he succeeded in subduing a furious maniac, who had broke loose from confinement in a mad-house.”

\* *Hist. Nat.* lib. xxviii. c. 6.—Delrio treats at large of those magnetic doctors who cured their patients by anointing them with their spittle, by breathing upon them, and by manipulation. Rodericus a Castro (*Medic. Polit.* l. 4. c. 3.) seems to admit the reality of these cures, and tells us: “*In confirmationem adducunt experientiam et varia curationum genera mire frequentia, et praxin*

sons. On the other hand, the breath of some serpents is said to communicate a deadly poison.

When a child complains, the mother or the nurse frequently says that she will blow away the pain; and it is usual among the common people, in some countries, to treat the disease called St Anthony's Fire magnetically, by breathing upon the body. Borelli mentions that there exists a sect of physicians in India, who cure all sorts of diseases merely by the breath.

The quality of the saliva, in men and other animals, appears to depend much, not only upon the bodily health, but also upon the state and disposition of the mind. The natural office of this secretion is to prepare the food for digestion. Most of us may have experienced the alteration produced upon this secreted fluid by corporeal disease: the passions seem to exercise a strong influence over it; and madness converts it into poison.

The saliva is said to have a peculiar efficacy in the case of swellings. It was employed as a remedy by the *Ensaladores* in Spain, who, according to Delrio, cured diseases by means of the saliva and the breath. \*

*quotidianam militum qui solo afflatu, osculo, aut nudi lintei applicatione, sanant etiam atrocissima vulnera, qui omnes dono sanitatis in variis morbis se præditos gloriantur."*

\* DELRIO, *Disquisit. Magic.* Mogunt. 1606, tom. i. p. 69.

It is scarcely necessary for me to repeat, that the alleged efficacy of these simple natural influences has been brought under notice, merely in deference to the very general popular belief. The reader is at liberty to attach what degree of credit he pleases to the accounts given of their sanative virtues. The spiritual magnetist may hold that there is no efficacy in the things themselves, but that the salutary influence is derived from the will and intention of the individual who employs the processes. Even in this view, however, the circumstances are not undeserving of attention, as they may be considered as indicating the employment of certain means towards a particular end, without any knowledge of the operating principle. \*

\* Fienus, in his well known work, *De Viribus Imaginationis*, ascribes immense influence to the acts of the mind *per potentiam imaginativam*. "Etenim," says he, "infiniti authores diversas et admirandas virtutes ei adscripserunt: ipsummet vulgus et totus mundus dicit, et quasi pro comperto habet, per imaginationem mirabiles effectus contingere et corpore proprio et alieno: et non tantum hoc viri mediocriter docti, sed et mulierculæ ipsæ norunt et prædicant." He then refers to the authority of Aristotle, Avicenna, and other eminent persons, for the truth of the fact. The last-mentioned author expressly asserts, among other things, "animam humanam posse corpus sanum ad ægitudinem, et ægrum ad sanitatem convertere." Were we to reject all the other evidence of the reality of this fact, it could be completely substantiated by the indisputable phenomena of Animal Magnetism.

## CHAPTER III

IN order to enable us to prosecute, with any prospect of success, our inquiries into the operation of those influences, the alleged effects of which have been considered in the preceding chapter; it may be useful to direct our attention, for a short time, to some of those more remarkable sympathies which have been found to exist between the different parts of the corporeal frame, and also between the mind and the material organism. Here, indeed, we are led into an inquiry of vast extent, interest, and importance, as regards both philosophy and medicine. I confess that I feel myself quite incompetent to do justice to such a subject—a subject which has been hitherto too little investigated by physicians; and I have in vain sought for adequate information upon it, in the writings of professional men. There are some points, however, to which it is necessary that I should advert, in consequence of their connexion with the general object of this work.

From a quotation I formerly made from M. de

Buffon,\* the reader must have perceived the great value which that eminent naturalist set upon this inquiry; but the hints he threw out respecting its more extensive prosecution, so far, at least, as I am aware, do not seem to have attracted sufficient attention from those most competent to the investigation. Yet, as calculated to afford us some insight into the nature of those hidden springs which stimulate the animal motions and influence the vital functions—to unveil, in part, the causes of corporeal change and of moral affectability, especially in those cases where they are clearly seen to act and react reciprocally upon each other—the inquiry is of infinite importance to physiology in general, and more particularly to the study of Animal Magnetism. Craving the indulgence of the reader, therefore, for the very imperfect manner in which I am enabled to treat this highly interesting subject, I shall proceed to lay before him the scanty information I have been able to collect; trusting, at the same time, that it will soon be rendered more satisfactory, by the co-operation of other individuals far better qualified for the investigation.

Of the first of those kinds of sympathy to which I have alluded, there is none more remarkable than that which has been so frequently observed to exist between the stomach and every other part of the

\* See *Introduction*, p. 27.

body—with the head, for instance, and *vice versa*, with the kidneys and other organs, with the skin, &c.—that particular sympathy of the heart and lungs with the stomach and bowels—the sympathy of the heart with the lungs, &c. From all which it evidently appears that the stomach is the principal seat of all the most remarkable sympathetic affections which occur in valetudinary states of the body—a circumstance to which, although well known to medical men, both in ancient and modern times, I would take the liberty of seriously directing the attention of physiologists and professional physicians, with a view to farther investigation.\* Every disorder accompanied with severe pain affects the stomach; while this viscus affects, not only in its diseased state, every part of the system, but at other times, the effects of healthful stimulants applied to it are instantly communicated to the rest of the body—as when we take food, wine, medicine, &c.

Mental emotions also exercise a very powerful influence upon the stomach. Dr Paris observes, that “the passions of the mind, fear, anxiety, and rage, are well known to affect the nervous system, and, through that medium, the stomach; and so

\* Van Helmont seems to have been fully aware of the great importance of this inquiry; but since his time, the subject appears to have been much neglected.

immediately are its consequences experienced, that a person receiving unpleasant intelligence at the hour of a repast, is incapable of eating a morsel, whatever might have been his appetite before such a communication.

“ Read o'er *this* ; and after *this* ; and then  
To breakfast with what appetite you may.”\*

Moral causes, indeed, have the most powerful, and immediate, and permanent effect, of any, upon the state of the stomach. Among these have been reckoned excessive grief, mental depression, from whatever cause, anxiety about worldly affairs, intense thought, &c. combined with the deprivation

\* Mr Carbut, in his *Clinical Lectures*, makes some very pertinent observations to the same purport. “ As every person,” says he, “ has probably experienced, the emotions of the mind have a powerful influence on the stomach. Let a person who is going to sit down to dinner, with a good appetite, receive a piece of news, either exceedingly joyful, or exceedingly distressing, his appetite goes in a moment. Children who are about to set out on a pleasant journey, it is well known, cannot eat. This, when I was a child, used to be called being ‘ journey proud.’ On the other hand, a blow upon the stomach will sometimes take away life instantly ; and a drink of cold water, when the body has been very hot, has often had the same effect. Attend to your companions when on a journey a-foot ; as their stomachs grow empty, how sullen and silent the whole party becomes ! Let a crust of bread, a little cheese, a glass of ale or wine, be taken, and cheerfulness immediately reigns, even long before any nutriment had time to reach the general circulative system. These things all shew the general sympathy between the stomach and every other part of the body.”

of sufficient bodily exercise and free air. "In this country," says Dr James Johnson, "where man's relations with the world around him are multiplied beyond all example in any other country, in consequence of the intensity of interest attached to politics, religion, commerce, literature, and the arts; where the temporal concerns of an immense proportion of the population are in a state of perpetual vacillation; where spiritual affairs excite great anxiety in the minds of many; and where speculative risks are daily run by all classes, from the disposers of empires in Leadenhall Street, down to the potato-merchant in Covent Garden;—it is really astonishing to observe the deleterious influence of these mental perturbations on the functions of the digestive organs. The operation of physical causes, numerous as they are, dwindles into complete insignificance when compared with that of anxiety or tribulation of mind."\*

The celebrated Dr Cullen, in his *Physiology*, remarks, that there is one very general case of very great influence in almost the whole of the doctrines of the *materia medica*, as this particular sympathy is concerned in the operation of the most part of

X \* The effect of cheerfulness and occasional mirth in the preservation of health, and the promotion of convalescence, must be familiar to all medical men. I think it was Dr Arbuthnot who used to say that laughing lengthens life, and that the arrival of a single mountebank in a town contributes more to promote the health of the inhabitants than a dozen of physicians.



medicines, and explains the operation of many which is otherwise difficult to be understood.

“This is the operation of medicines upon the stomach, from which motions are often propagated to almost every distant part of the human body, and peculiar effects produced in those parts, whilst the medicine itself is only in contact with the stomach.

“The stomach is the part by which the most part of substances introduced into the interior parts of the body generally pass; and it is endued with a peculiar sensibility, which renders it ready to be affected by every substance entering into it that is active with respect to the human body. Every thing, therefore, of this kind introduced into the stomach, operates almost always there, and for the most part only there. It is now, however, well known to physicians, that the most considerable instance of the sympathy mentioned above, is afforded by the stomach, so connected with almost every other part of the system, that motions excited there are communicated to almost every other part of the body, and produce peculiar effects in those parts, however distant from the stomach itself. This, indeed, is very well known; but that the effects of many medicines which appear in other parts of the body are entirely owing to an action upon the stomach, and that the most part of medicines acting upon the system act immediately upon

the stomach only, is what has not been understood till very lately, and does not seem even yet to be very generally and fully perceived by the writers on the *materia medica*." This opinion the learned Doctor proceeds to confirm by many sound reasons and striking illustrations.

It would thus appear that the region of the stomach is a great and most important centre of nervous sensibility; but even those writers who have been forced by experience into an acknowledgment of this fact, do not seem to have made any adequate attempt to explain it; although they might naturally have been led to inquire how this sympathetic sensibility comes to be distributed from this centre throughout the whole system, in the manner above described. The nature and functions of the *plexus solaris*, or great concatenation of sympathetic nerves, situated in this region, have not yet been sufficiently investigated, although it evidently appears to act a very important part in the animal economy, especially in certain morbid states of the system, or disturbed sensibility. The investigation, if conducted with a view to the general sympathy in question, might perhaps lead to some interesting results.\*

\* Dr Bertrand, the ingenious author of a learned work on Somnambulism, thinks it more than probable that, in relation to the internal life, the *plexus solaris* performs the same functions which we ascribe to the brain, as the organ of the intellec-

There are also various other sympathies, although of less importance in relation to our sub-

tual faculties in the waking state, in relation to the external life.

In the solar *plexus*, which some of the ancients called the *cerebrum abdominale*, the soul is thought to derive the materials necessary for the formation of its intuitive judgments.

A number of eminent German and French anatomists and physiologists, in recent times, have bestowed considerable pains in investigating the structure and course of the nervous *ganglia* and *plexus*, and of the various abdominal nerves connected with them. (See J. F. MECKEL; *De vera nervi intercostalis origine. In diss. de quinto pari nervorum cerebri.* Goeting. 1784.—J. G. WALTER; *Tabulae nervorum thoracis et abdominis.* Berolini, 1783.) Bichat in France, and Hufeland in Germany, came, about the same time, upon the idea that all these nerves, although organically connected with the cerebral nerves, constituted a peculiar and independent system of nervous influence. (See Bichat's *General Anatomy*, and C. W. Hufeland's *Pathologie.*) This idea was subsequently farther pursued, and expounded with much clearness and ingenuity, by Autenrieth (*Handbuch der Physiologie*), Burdach (*Physiologie*), and especially by Reil (*On the peculiar properties of the Ganglionic System, and its relation to the Cerebral System*; in the *Archiv für Physiologie*, vol. vii. No. 2, pp. 189–254). Humboldt (in the *Gazette Littéraire de Berlin*, 1788, p. 312) afterwards extended this theory, by his evidence in favour of the external expansion of the nervous influence.

As it would lead me too far, were I to enter minutely into the details of this ingenious theory, I think it may be sufficient for me to have pointed out the various works in which it is unfolded, and to recommend farther investigation by competent inquirers. I may observe, however, that the theory is of great importance to Animal Magnetism; as most of the magnetic phenomena seem capable of being explained only by the relation in which the cerebral and ganglionic systems stand towards each other.

ject, besides those already mentioned; such as that of the internal membrane of the *bronchi* with the skin, on the application of cold to the surface of the body, in the production of a catarrh—that of the skin with the stomach and bowels, and *vice versa*, at the commencement and during the continuance of fevers, &c. So universal, indeed, is this sympathetic connexion between the different parts of the living system, that we might safely subscribe to the *dictum* of the great father of physic—*Confluxio una, conspiratio una, consentientia omnia*.

This universal sympathy of the whole frame with a particular part or parts, appears to owe its existence to that unity and contiguity of substance in the brain and nerves, by means of which all the different parts of the system are so intimately connected with each other, by means of the *ganglia* and *plexus*, that if any one part is affected, the rest must suffer more or less. That this reciprocal sympathy, indeed—this action and re-action—has its origin in the various minute ramifications of the nervous system, seems liable to no doubt. We know that the nerves, which are so many elongations of the medullary substance of the brain, are conductors of part of the vital principle to all the organs of the body, for the purposes of life, sensation, and action, and that it is through the medium of the nerves that the vital principle is acted up-

on. In short, the nerves are the conditions of the corporeal *affectability*. It is also well known to the profession, that many eminent physicians and physiologists have suspected, assumed, or found themselves compelled to admit a certain permeability of the nerves, *i. e.* that they contain, secrete, circulate, transmit, or in some manner conduct some fluid or substance, and, consequently, that they have cavities, whether discoverable by human optics or not. To this hypothesis, and the conclusions to be drawn from it, I shall have occasion to revert hereafter. In the mean time, I have merely alluded to it as affording apparently the best explanation of those mutual sympathies which are known to exist in the human frame.

X I believe there has been of late some controversy regarding this sympathy between different and distant parts of the organism—whether it may be traced to nervous irritation, and “a necessary and permanent consent” of these parts, or whether it arises simply from the effects of “certain *mental sensations*.” In an ingenious paper by Professor Alison, *On the Physiological Principle of Sympathy*, inserted in the 2d volume of the Transactions of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh, in which he supports the latter of these views, the learned author observes: “As this is a subject of considerable intricacy and difficulty, so I think it

is one of those which has of late years not attracted as much attention from medical inquirers as its importance deserves. In consequence of this, the progress which had been already made in the inquiry by physiologists of the last age, seems to have been overlooked, and speculations brought forward, which a careful consideration of the facts collected by them might perhaps have repressed." In his observations, Dr Alison remarks, that he has chiefly in view "the excitation or alteration of action in the animal economy, by the irritation of distant parts;" and he proceeds thus: "This striking and important general fact in physiology, used to be regarded as denoting, or as depending on, a necessary and permanent *consent of parts*; and the reason of this was anxiously looked for in connexions or anastomoses of the nerves of the parts irritated, and the parts thrown into action by the irritation, whereby it was supposed that an irritation applied to the one might operate on the other, in like manner as if applied to itself. But the researches of Dr Whytt and Dr Monroe on this subject were, as I think, quite successful in establishing two points in regard to such phenomena; 1st, That they cannot be explained by the connexions of the nerves of the sympathising parts; and, 2dly, That they do not indicate any necessary consent or sympathy between *individual parts of*

*the body, but are, in general, simply the effects of certain mental sensations; and that, in these instances, one part of the body sympathizes with another, only in so far as the sensation, which is the natural and appropriate stimulus of the one, is excitable by irritation of the other."*

In a Note to the preceding passage, the learned Professor makes the following observations: "We know that a certain portion of the nervous system (at the origin of the nerves of sense), and cannot doubt that a certain change in that portion, is necessary to the production of every sensation, of which an animal is susceptible. The mode in which that physical change excites a mental act, and the mode in which that or any other mental act, in its turn, excites a physical change in any part of the nervous system, and thereby acts on muscles or other organs, are things not only unknown, but manifestly inscrutable. We have, therefore, no means of judging, whether it is strictly speaking from mental sensations, that the different sympathetic phenomena proceed, or whether they are more properly the results of those physical changes in the nervous matter, which immediately precede and cause the sensations, and which are known to us only through them. But if the sensations are the only antecedents, in the order of time, which can be pointed out as uniformly pre-

ceding the sympathetic changes, I apprehend that we may lawfully assign them as the causes of these changes, without giving ourselves any trouble as to that indeterminable question."

In a subsequent passage, Dr Alison makes the following most important remarks, in which I most cordially agree with that learned physician: "I am aware, that some physiologists consider all particular reference to the acts or affections of mind, and to the distinctions existing among these, as foreign to the proper business of their science, and expect no result from such discussions, but endless and nugatory metaphysical disputes. But although it must be admitted, that such disputes are to be found in most writings on the physiology of mind, yet I will venture to maintain, on the other hand, that it is absolutely incumbent on every one who studies the physiology of the nervous system in the human body, to consider carefully the laws of the mental phenomena, as made known to us by our consciousness, and as generalized in the writings of metaphysicians.

"Whether the nervous system be intended to serve other purposes in the animal economy or not, *it is certain that it is intended to serve the grand and essential purpose of maintaining the connexion between mind and body.* The study of its functions, therefore, necessarily embraces the consideration



of two distinct kinds of phenomena; and however minutely the physiologist may have examined the anatomy of the brain and nerves, and however accurately he may have noted the effects of injuries of these parts, in experiments on animals, and in observations on disease; still, unless he has carefully considered and generalized the mental part of the processes, of which the brain and nerves are the instruments, he has done but half his work." \*

At the conclusion of his interesting paper, the ingenious Professor observes, that his object had been to state the grounds of his belief in these two principles in Physiology, "*first*, That what are called sympathetic actions are, in general, actions caused by sensations; and, *secondly*, That no anatomical explanation can be given of the fact, that certain sensations act upon certain nerves only. †

\* These are sound philosophical views, and it were very desirable that a professional physician of Dr Alison's high acquirements should apply himself to a more extensive inquiry into this most interesting subject, combining mental with physical physiology.

† This last ground of belief is opposed to Sir Charles Bell's views, as I find them expressed in the following passage of his *Bridgewater Treatise*: "Experiment proves, what is suggested by anatomy, that not only the organs of the senses are appropriated to particular classes of sensations, but that the nerves intermediate between the brain and the outward organs are respectively capable of receiving no other sensations but such as are adapted to their particular organs."

Into the merits of this controversy, for the reasons above

The discussion in Professor Alison's paper is too strictly professional to entitle me to enter into it more at large; indeed, I do not conceive myself competent to give any decided opinion upon the subject. But I am not aware that he has stated any thing that can invalidate the propositions I have advanced, upon the authority of many eminent physicians, from Hippocrates downwards, relative to the sympathies that really exist between different and distant parts of the animal economy, through the mediation of the nervous system. My business is with facts, rather than the explanation of facts. Whether these sympathetic actions originate from a connexion between the different nerves, which are the sole instruments of all sensations; or whether they are determined by mental sensations, as maintained by Dr Alison—these are questions which I willingly leave to be decided by scientific physiologists and physicians.

stated, I do not mean to enter; but in the sequel of this work, I shall have occasion to bring forward some matters, not of theory, but of fact, which, I trust, may occasion some farther investigation into the powers and susceptibilities of the nervous system.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE second class of sympathies to which I formerly referred, is composed of those which are found to exist between the mind and the body. These are of infinitely greater importance in the present investigation, but, perhaps, still more difficult to account for upon intelligible and satisfactory principles; inasmuch as it must be easier to trace and explain the actions and re-actions of one homogeneous substance, than to discover the principle which renders this substance susceptible of being acted upon by another being of a totally different nature and quality.\* The very interesting nature of the facts, however,—and these are matters of observation—independently of any at-

\* “As vital properties do not differ from the properties of inanimate nature, in degree, or by any other modification, but have nothing in common with them, it follows, that when living bodies affect each other only by their vital properties, the result must be such as bears no analogy to any of the properties of inanimate nature; and, consequently, that in all processes which have any such analogy, one of the agents must operate by the properties of inanimate nature.”—Dr W. PHILIP, *On the Vital Functions*, 3d ed. p. 202.

tempt to explain their causes, will do more than repay the labour of inquiry.

Bodily suffering always affects the mind, in a greater or less degree; while impressions made upon the mind have been known to produce surprising changes on the habit of the body. The remarkable histories of John de Poitiers and Henry IV. of France, have been recorded by historians, and corroborated by physicians.\*

It is quite notorious, indeed, that the passions of the mind occasionally exert a most extraordinary influence over the corporeal frame. An excess of joy or of fear has been known to occasion speedy death; and the same thing, or, in some cases, insanity, has been produced by sudden sur-

\* The former having been convicted of being an associate in the conspiracy of the Constable of Bourbon against Francis I., and condemned to lose his head, became so much distracted by fear and violent passion, that, in one night, his hair turned entirely grey; and he was seized with so violent a fever, that, though his daughter procured his pardon from the king, no remedies could preserve his life. The latter, when he heard the unexpected and mortifying news, that Henry III. had published the edict of July 1585, against the Huguenots, was so greatly affected, that, in an instant, one of his mustachios was turned grey.—See MORERI, art. *Diane de Poitiers*; THUANUS, lib. iii.; ANSELME, *Palais d'honneur*; SULLY, *Memoires*, tom. i.—Another story of the same kind is related in HOWEL'S *Letters*, p. 179; and a still more curious one in VERDUC, *Operat. de Chirurg.* cap. xiv. p. 337.

prise. An eminent medical writer \* mentions, upon unquestionable authority, that, upon the arrival of the alarming news of the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom, in the year 1747, such was the general consternation, that many women were known to die of fright soon after the intelligence was communicated to them. Sudden death, from an excess of joy, although equally certain, is more uncommon; but there are many instances of it upon record. Livy relates, that two women at Rome died of excessive joy, upon finding their sons return, safe and unhurt, from the battle of Tharsymene. There are numerous instances of sudden surprise having occasioned imbecility, insanity, or death itself. †

The mental affections exert a very remarkable influence over the bodily secretions. Of this many familiar instances might be noticed; but they will readily occur to the reader. I shall therefore content myself with quoting the following case, because it has been less commonly observed, rests upon the best authority, and is of great importance to our argument.

\* DR GARDINER, *On the Animal Economy*, p. 40.

† This is corroborated by the observation of the celebrated Dr Mead: "Annon hominum pessundare vehementes animi affectiones sæpe experiuntur? Subitus terror multos interemit; et ipsa quandoque supra modum exultans lætitia fuit exitio."—MEAD, *Medica Sacra*, p. 70.

My old, ingenious, and highly respected friend, Mr Wardrop of London, one of the most eminent surgeons of whom this or any other country can boast, observes, in one of his very able surgical lectures, that "the only circumstance of importance to be particularly attended to, when operating upon an infant, is the management of the nurse. I am convinced, says he, that in many cases where operations on infants have proved fatal, the death has been caused by changes produced in the nurse's milk, in consequence of the mental agitation which, as you may suppose, is often produced in the mind either of the nurse or the mother, when an operation on her young charge becomes necessary. I have seen several remarkable instances of this kind, and similar cases are recorded by authors. The first case which came under my own notice, took place some years ago in an infant from whom I had removed a small, very hard tumour, which was situated behind the ear. No fever or inflammation supervened; and after suppuration had been established, and the wound was granulating in the most healthy manner, the child died suddenly of convulsions. On inquiry, I found that the mother had been thrown into a violent fit of passion late at night, and that she suckled her infant soon afterwards, immediately subsequent to which the fatal convulsion succeeded. In another

instance, I was sent for in great haste to see an infant in a convulsive fit, and on inquiry found, that the nurse who was employed to suckle the infant had been guilty of some misconduct, for which she had been severely reprimanded. Soon after this mental agitation, the infant was suckled by her, and that occurrence was followed by the convulsive attack referred to. The late Sir Richard Croft, who had the immediate care of the child, informed me, that he had frequently known similar cases, and that *all the mischief was to be attributed to the pernicious effects which moral excitement produces on the milk of the nurse*—an effect with which, in some degree, every one is familiar. Mr North, in his treatise on the *Convulsions of Infants*, makes allusion to this circumstance, and has mentioned examples of it.”

It is of importance, however, to observe, that impressions made upon the mind may exert a beneficial as well as a prejudicial influence upon the state of the body;—they may restore as well as destroy healthy action. This, indeed, is agreeable to reason, and the fact has been abundantly confirmed by experience. There are numberless well-authenticated instances, in which diseases have been found to be alleviated, if not entirely removed, by passions excited in the mind—by fear, terror, anger, joy, &c.

It is somewhere recorded, that a person afflicted with silent melancholy having been put into a violent passion, immediately recovered his sanity of mind. Another, who was going to drown himself, fell in with robbers, defended himself vigorously against them, and returned home cured of his suicidal propensities. Fright, sudden affections, vehement emotions, have, in hundreds of cases, operated the instantaneous removal of insanity.

It has been usual to refer all such cases to the influence of the imagination—a very convenient mode of explanation, but which, in reality, only serves as a cloak to cover our ignorance, and seems to be resorted to for the purpose of saving us the trouble of investigation. It appears quite evident that, in all these instances, there is some action exerted on the vital principle, probably through the medium of the nervous system.

The same eminent physician to whom I lately referred—the late Dr John Gardiner of Edinburgh, observes in his treatise on the *Animal Economy*, that “in chronic diseases, accompanied with a preternatural irritability in the nerves, and a variety of different complaints, arising from a morbid mobility of particular parts, as in hysterical and hypochondriac patients, in persons afflicted with chronic asthma, or with a fit of the gout, toothach, or rheumatism, I have known these several disorders suspended for



a time, when the mind has been under the influence of fear, surprise, or roused to a fixed attention to some interesting object. I have frequently observed in practice, delicate hysterical women, who for many months had seldom enjoyed one day's health, suddenly relieved from every complaint, when a favourite child was attacked with a disease in which danger was apprehended, and they continued in appearance to be in perfect health during the whole course of the illness, and exhibited an unusual alertness in discharging their duty as nurses and as parents."—"A gentleman of great courage and honour," says Dr Gardiner, "who had become valetudinary, and subject to the asthma, by a long service in India, as an officer in the land forces, told me that, during their encampment, he was attacked with a severe fit of that disorder, which usually lasted ten or twelve days: That, upon the third or fourth day of his illness, when he could only breathe in an erect posture, and without motion, imagining that it was not in his power to move six yards to save his life, the alarm guns were fired for the whole line to turn out, because a party of the Mahrattas had broke into the camp, and fearing certain death if he remained in his tent, he sprung out with an alacrity that astonished his attendants, instantly mounted his horse, and drew his sword with great ease, which, the day before,

he could not move from its scabbard, though he used his whole strength in the attempt. From the instant of the alarm and surprise, the debility left him, together with the asthma; nor did the disorder return till its usual period.\*

“From the above instances,” continues Dr Gardiner, “and others of a similar nature, where the ordinary course of a disease, or the disease itself, is suspended for a time, we have reason to believe that, in disorders of the body, as well as in those of the mind, there is an irregular and an unequal distribution of the powers of action, which seems to be rectified by a sudden and continued exertion of the powers of the mind. *This exertion gives greater stability to the nerves as conductors. Their condition is immediately changed from a morbid to a*

\* Cases of the same kind will be found in the *Memoires de CHAVAGNAC*, p. 332; in GASSENDI, *Opera*, vol. iv. p. 307; in PECHLINI, *Obs. Physico-Medice*; Hamb. 1692, pp. 453, 454, 456, 457.

HIPPOCRATES was so fully aware of this species of influence, that he expressly recommended *ἐνθουσιασμός*—anger, sudden excitement—as of great service in certain diseases; and in this opinion he is supported in the strongest manner by ARETÆUS, PAULUS, and GALEN. See GALEN, in *Lib. de Theriaca*.

The same opinion has been confirmed by eminent medical writers in more modern times. See, in particular, FIENUS, *De viribus Imaginationis*, and PECHLINUS, *ut sup.*

I may here observe, by-the-by, that the elder writers appear to use the terms, *Imaginatio*, *Phantasia*, in a somewhat different and more definite sense than that which seems to be attached to them at the present day.

*more vigorous state : The whole system acquires such a degree of strength as enables it to resist, in a surprising manner, the ordinary action of the cause of the disease.*” “ *These facts shew the necessity and great use of constantly employing the mind, either by business or amusement, in the cure of certain diseases accompanied with a preternatural irritability of particular parts.*

“ *As a solution of opium taken into the stomach, injected into the bowels, or applied to any part of the body, so as to have its full effect on the nerves, never fails, in proportion to the quantity used, to lessen or destroy the sensibility, and the powers of the nerves to which it is applied ; and as these effects are speedily communicated, in a less degree, to the rest of the system ; in like manner, when any part of the body, from its diseased state, comes to be endued with such a preternatural degree of irritability, as to be, from the slightest causes, almost in constant pain, and this for a number of days or weeks together, it has always the effect to render the rest of the nerves irritable to a morbid degree, or, to use a term in music, to bring the rest of the nerves more in unison with those of the diseased part than they were before. This effect of long-continued pain, in rendering the system more irritable, is not perhaps so observable as the effects of opium in a contrary way.*”

Again: "If we wish to moderate the severity of pain, or to take off a particular spasmodic affection, in any part of the body, a dose of laudanum or opium is prescribed, suitable to the age, constitution, or habit of the patient in the use of this medicine. In a few minutes after its application to the nerves of the stomach, they become less sensible. The same diminished sensibility is soon communicated to the whole nerves, and the pain in the diseased part is proportionably abated, or entirely removed." The learned Doctor afterwards proceeds to mention, that "we sometimes meet with a patient who, from a singularity of constitution, disagrees with opium, in whatever form it is given;" and in such cases, and where the effects of an opiate are considered necessary for the removal of pain, he endeavours to point out the best means of obviating this inconvenience.

I need make no apology for introducing this long quotation from the excellent work of Dr Gardiner, because his observations appear to be not only judicious, and of great importance to medical science, but also exceedingly interesting, when considered in relation to the doctrine of Animal Magnetism. If by any means whatever (the more simple assuredly the better) we can succeed in soothing the preternatural irritability of the ner-

vous system, and in any way facilitate a restoration of the healthy action of the vital functions, do we not go a great way towards the effectual cure of a variety of serious complaints, by lulling painful sensations, and alleviating or removing the morbid symptoms, leaving the rest to be performed by the *vis medicatrix naturæ*? Now, these are precisely the effects generally produced by the magnetic processes—they act, at the same time, as a sedative and a tonic or corroborant, in a degree far beyond any article in the *Materia Medica*; and a better description of these salutary effects could hardly be given, than by using the language of Dr Gardiner, when speaking of the proper administration of opiates. These effects, indeed, in the case of Animal Magnetism, have been said to depend upon the influence of the imagination \*—a hack-

\* Those of the opponents of Animal Magnetism who adopt the imagination-hypothesis, have never yet, so far as I am aware, condescended to inform us what they mean by Imagination. Do they use the term in the sense of the Archæus of Paracelsus and Van Helmont—the *anima medica*, the vital spirits, the intelligence, *the life*, of other eminent physicians? If they do, then let them say so; for, in that case, it may perhaps appear upon this, as upon many other occasions, that our controversy is more verbal than real. The Animal Magnetists have incontrovertibly demonstrated, that the phenomena of which they speak cannot, with any propriety, be ascribed to the imagination, according to the common meaning of the word. As well might we attempt to refer the effects of ordinary medicines solely to the influence of the imagination.

neyed and unmeaning assertion, which, so far as it is at all intelligible, has been completely disproved by the experience of every practical magnetiser, and contradicted by all who have any real knowledge of the subject, but which I do not at present intend to combat. But if we must have a determinate cause assigned for every known effect, will any physician be kind enough to inform us upon what principle he depends in the case of the administration of opiates? Or, if ignorant of this, why he ever employs these, or, indeed, any other medicines? To me it appears, that all we can know, in the one case, as in the other, is, that certain antecedents are generally followed by certain consequents; and this is quite sufficient for all practical purposes. And let them depend upon whatever principle they may, those means are certainly to be accounted the best, which, according to experience, do most safely, and, at the same time, most effectually, promote the object in view, viz. the relief of the patient; and for accomplishing this object, in many cases, the superior success of the magnetic treatment is unquestionable. Those individuals who decline to listen to the doctrine, until they receive an explanation of the cause of the phenomena, resemble petted children, who refuse to eat their bread and butter, until informed what particular cow produced the milk from which

the butter was made. "If medical men assert," says Mr Chenevix, "that the alleged cures of Mesmerism are performed by the mind, and that this is the peculiar province of imaginative therapeutics, do they not culpably neglect the most powerful agent of mental medicine, if they do not practise Mesmerism? If imagination can cure diseases, and if this be its most energetic exciter, then excite it thus:—Cure by imagination, and the sick will bless you.\* If the cause be analogous to a rotatory or a rocking motion"—this was the opinion of some of the professional gentlemen who witnessed Mr Chenevix's experiments—"then whirl or rock your patients into sleep and health. If it be a new agency, find it out, and prove it by experiment."

To these recommendations of Mr Chenevix, I would beg leave to add—Do not allow yourselves to lose sight of the facts, while attempting to discover their causes;—do not overlook or disregard the effects, although the principle should for ever remain undetected.

\* See the opinion and advice upon this subject of the late celebrated Professor Dugald Stewart, to be quoted hereafter.

## CHAPTER V.

HIPPOCRATES long ago affirmed, that Nature herself frequently cured diseases; and he thought that her most vigilant attendants and observers were the best physicians. The observation has since been often repeated, and the opinion appears to have given rise to the various hypotheses concerning the nature of this sanative principle.\*

\* “There is no curable malady from which the patient does not sometimes recover, without the aid of foreign remedies, by the unassisted efforts of the vital principle. *A fortiori* ought this cure to take place, when, by means of a methodical and well understood communication of an effective fluid, the defective fluid of the patient is restored, and better directed in its action. And let it not be thought that it is essentially the quantity or the quality of drugs which effects cures; Nature alone cures, by restoring, in some manner or other—whether by natural or by artificial means—order in the disturbed functions. A cure is nothing else than a victory obtained by the vital principle over the adverse forces presented by the disease.”—*Memoir sur le Fluide Vital, &c.* par M. le Docteur Ch. in the *Biblioth. du Magnet. Anim.* t. ii. p. 26.

These opinions are corroborated, in part, by the experience of the celebrated Dr Hoffmann, and by the great success, in recent times, of the homœopathic system of medicine, which has proved such a *shibboleth* to the profession.



Hence, no doubt, the *Archæus* of Paracelsus and Van Helmont, the *Anima medica* of Dr Nichols, the *Vital Senses* of Dr Lawrence, the *Intelligence* of Stahl, the *Life* of Hunter and Abernethy, and the *Imagination* of the modern antagonists of Animal Magnetism. “Whether the great dexterity and seeming contrivance of the vital economy, in the general conduct and frequent cure of diseases, be only the necessary and mechanical result of that stupendous wisdom exerted in the fabric and constitution of the body, for its own temporary security in a vital state; or whether any conscious intelligence, distinct from the mind, acts with real sagacity and intention for the same purpose, seems very difficult to ascertain.” The fact affirmed by Hippocrates, however, is, I believe, generally admitted by the most learned and experienced physicians; and much less confidence is now placed in the efficacy of the drugging system, so prevalent in the medical practice of a former age. To such practitioners as are still attached to the employment of the chemical remedies, and the chemical remedies alone, in the cure of all complaints, I would humbly recommend the following observations of another eminent physician, Dr Thomas Simson, in his *Inquiry into the Vital and Animal Actions*. “The power of the mind in raising sensations, and with them the consequences that

attend them, is past all contradiction. The sight of an orange gives an agreeable taste, and causes the discharge of the saliva: the sight of a vomit or purge will sometimes produce the effects which ordinarily attend them when taken inwardly: bread pills, taken with a confidence that they were mercurial, have produced a salivation. By all which," says the Doctor, "I persuade myself it must be admitted, that there is scarce an action performed by any kind of *stimulus*, but what can be copied and performed by the fancy, or a strong idea of what effects a certain stimulus has produced." Now, I do not see how any physician who makes such ample admissions as these, can, in candour, presume to deny the alleged efficacy of the magnetic processes, in the face of an overwhelming body of evidence, without any investigation of the facts, without any knowledge or study of the conditions upon which that efficacy is said to depend. While upon this subject, too, of the prevailing attachment to physical means of cure, I may quote the high authority of the celebrated Dr Frederic Hoffmann, who, in one of his works, thus declares his confidence in simple and familiar remedies: "I affirm with an oath," says he, "that there was a time when I ran after chemical remedies with great ardour; but age and farther experience have persuaded me, that a few medicines, judiciously

chosen, taken from substances the most simple, and the most unpromising in appearance, relieve, with greater promptitude, and with greater efficacy, the general run of diseases, than all the chemical preparations, the most rare and the most *recherchées*."

We have thus seen, that, in consequence of some sympathetic connexion, impressions made on the mind are occasionally capable of producing extraordinary changes on the corporeal habit; and of this fact we are as certain as that a change can be wrought on it by means of medicines, or any other external cause. \*

\* In the curious journal of his disease and cure, which has been left us by Aristides the orator, the writer informs us, that he dreamt one night that a bull attacked him, but did him no other injury than giving him a push under the right knee. Upon awaking, he found a small carbuncle on that part of his body. We find in the life of Conrad Gessner, that he once dreamt of having been bitten by a serpent, at a time when a malignant epidemic disorder was raging in the neighbourhood. He predicted that a boil would appear on the spot, and it was accordingly observed next day. A man dreamt that he was struck by a stone on the breast, and awoke in a fright. When light was brought him, he perceived a large black mark on the spot where he felt pain.—(*Ephemerid. Nat. Curios.* Dec. i. Ann. ii. Obs. 128.) Similar effects have been produced in the waking state. Malebranche tells us, that a young girl suffered severe pain for several days in that part of the foot where she had seen blood drawn from another person. A young man of fourteen, in 1777, fainted on witnessing an execution on the wheel, and suffered violent pain, and had blue spots on the parts of his body corresponding to those where the criminal had been hit by the

I am now about to notice another species of this influence, which has furnished nearly all the opponents of Animal Magnetism with what they seem to consider a decisive argument against that mode of treatment;—although the influence in question can be demonstrated to be very real and very general;—and although it may be said to constitute one of the greatest, most important, and most curious *arcana* in medical science. It is laid down by the advocates of the particular treatment alluded to, that *faith* in the operator, and *confidence* in the patient, are very important conditions of its success. Now, it does appear somewhat strange to me, that such a circumstance as this should be considered as rendering suspicious the alleged facts of Animal Magnetism, seeing that the same faith and confidence are required in all medical practice—nay, are essentially necessary to the success of every important transaction in life. In the ordinary medical practice, would not the prospect of success be greatly diminished, if, in any instance, the physician had no faith in the efficacy of his medicines, while the patient, on the other hand, had no confidence in the skill of his physician? Is it not the primary object of every great physician to inspire his patient with confidence in the wheel.—(Sigaud de la Fond, *Diction. des Merveilles de la Nature*, &c.)

efficacy of the treatment employed? And is not the faith of the patient in the efficacy of the treatment a mighty means of recovery?

“That the eager confidence of the patient in the skill of his physician, and the firm expectation of relief by his means, have sometimes a wonderful efficacy in restoring health, is a point not to be doubted of. FIENUS, besides corroborating this opinion by the authority of GALEN and others, tells us, that, in general, all physicians subscribed to it; and he gives us several instances of cures brought about by the use of means, in themselves of no efficacy, if not ridiculous, nay, which to all appearance were hurtful, but which the strong desire and confidence of the patients endowed with a sanative virtue.\* PECHLIN, also, is very full,

\* *De Viribus Imaginationis*, p. 169-170.—“Etenim Gale- nus, 1. prognost. dicit confidentiam ægri de medico plurimum facere ad salutem, idque se in seipso expertam esse; et prop- terea illum medicum melius sanaturum, qui melius poterit per- suadere. Albertus Magnus, 4. de anima, scribit ægrum per confidentiam de suo medico tantum sanare ipsum quantum me- dicus medicamentis.....Communiter omnes medici, magnam vim ejusmodi confidentiæ ascribunt.....Probatur quoque ex- perientia et exemplis.....Docet etiam experientia multos in febris habentes summum cibi alicujus desiderium, et fortissi- mam imaginationem quod talis cibus esset eos sanatos, come- dendo eum, sæpissime fuisse sanatos, etiamsi ipsi cibi secundum regulas medicinæ illi morbo noxii et contrarii haberentur..... Quod cum non fiat virtute naturali ipsorum ciborum, reliquum est, ut non fiat nisi virtute firmæ ægrorum confidentiæ et in-

to the same purpose. In his opinion, vast is the power of the mind in determining the operation and efficacy of medicines. It will, according to him, not only diminish or increase their usual effects, but also change them to a manner of operation directly contrary; and communicate a healing quality to the most inadequate means, even to a bread-pill disguised as a medicine, and swallowed with a vast confidence in the skill of the person who administers it."\*

This subject of the sanative influence of faith and confidence in medical practice, is treated with profound knowledge, and much philosophical acumen, by a learned and able writer in a French publication, at one time, I believe, of considerable celebrity and extensive circulation. The writer in question observes, that, "if it be true (and indeed it cannot be doubted) that among the causes which are capable of modifying the state of the vital functions, there are none more rapid, more powerful, and more infallible, than moral impressions, of what mighty importance is it for the physician to acquire a practical knowledge of the curative effects which these impressions may produce! And how tense imaginationis."—Fienus quotes many other authorities and gives several examples of the efficacy of the principle.

\* PECHLIN, *Obs.* p. 421-422.—The above quotation is from Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury's treatise, entitled, *The Criterion*, &c.

can he be permitted to remain ignorant of the influence exerted on the state of the sick by that confidence which they accord to the remedies which are administered to them.

“ In its most feeble degree, this confidence, produced by the slightest causes, determines those ameliorations, already sufficiently perceptible, which are constantly observed in the case of certain patients, every time they change their physician or the remedies.

“ More decided effects are manifested when a physician, employing, for the first time, a new remedy, communicates to the patient the hope of an efficacy, the precise limits of which have never been indicated by any experience; and this is a source of error from which even the most experienced physicians do not always escape. How many new substances are there, the efficacy of which, supported at first by many wonderful cures, has at length been reduced to nothing in the hands of experimentalists, who have made trial of them with a sort of doubt and distrust? To what shall we ascribe the curative effects of the magnet and of Perkinism, and that of acupuncture so recently extolled? It is a demonstrated fact, that the prussic acid no longer produces those effects which were observed at the time when hopes were entertained that it would prove a preservative against phtthisis.

Has not a well known physician recently announced, that he had administered successively, without the slightest effect, enormous doses of that narcotic, of which some fractions of a grain were at first sufficient to soothe with almost complete certainty?

“ When the new remedy is kept secret, the excess of confidence inspired in some minds by the mystery which surrounds it, renders its curative effects still more decided, especially in certain complaints in which the imagination plays a great part. Hence the miracles produced at all times, and in all countries, by the superstitious *recipes* against madness.

“ But, in order to observe the effects of confidence in its most elevated degree, we must look for them among pious patients, who, with lively faith, invoke the aid of superior intelligences. In them every requisite is combined—implicit faith—a firm and unbounded confidence in the support of a protecting Power which has no limits—finally, religious exaltation, which, considered in itself, is sufficient to render the organism soft as wax to all the modifications induced by the imagination.\* It is

\* Nothing can be more manifestly unjust and unphilosophical, although there is nothing more usual, than to maintain that all which takes place in cases of mental exaltation is mere deceit and imposition. Such an opinion can only arise from a want of due attention to those psychological principles which



in such cases, therefore, that are manifested those miraculous cures in which all religious sects, without exception, have gloried in their commence-

frequently manifest their extraordinary effects on the human constitution: For it cannot be doubted that the influence of the soul on the body is often as great as that of the body on the soul, although, hitherto, physicians have confined their studies principally to the latter. Even in the ordinary state, we can relieve ourselves from pain and suffering by a firm exercise of volition, by fixing the attention upon other objects; nay, very serious complaints may occasionally be cured in this way. It is well known, as has been already observed, what astonishing effects may be produced upon the human body by violent joy, surprise, terror—how easily fear and anxiety of mind may generate corporeal diseases. How, then, can it be denied that a profound devotional feeling, which in some individuals far surpasses all other feelings in power and intensity, may likewise have the greatest influence upon the human body?

Indeed, it would be much more incomprehensible if this were not the case, than that it is so; and it must appear at least equally incomprehensible that wine, which exhilarates, and to a certain degree elevates the soul of man, should also be an admirable medicine in many diseases, as that a firm confidence in God should penetrate body and soul, and again restore the sinking energies.

No true physician, therefore, will be surprised, when men are relieved from corporeal suffering by a strong and lively faith; and he will readily permit the more ignorant to represent these cures as miracles, while he sees in them only the effects of the same universal power of nature, of the same Spirit, which lies at the bottom of all other phenomena. The miraculous cures, so called, must interest him even as mere natural phenomena, as from them he can derive new proofs of the high importance of the *medicina psychica*, and he will be equally edified in his way by these facts, as that devout mind which contemplates them as miracles.

ment, even when the exaltation of their followers did not go the length of producing the ecstatic crisis, along with the incomprehensible phenomena which accompany it. In fact, to the manifestation of miraculous cures nothing more is necessary than a general and lively faith; and there is no religion which, even in its decline, has not endeavoured to re-ignite the zeal of its followers, in order to obtain them. When Paganism, everywhere in ruins, was rapidly disappearing before the numerous miracles performed by the faith of the new Christians, it still endeavoured to maintain its credit in the public estimation, by the supernatural cures performed in the temples of Æsculapius; and to these the defenders of Christianity could only object by ascribing them to the devil.\*

\* The practice of ascribing these physical or magnetic cures to his Satanic majesty and his ministers, prevailed down to a very late period, and is, perhaps, not even yet entirely extinct. The belief in question appears to have been powerfully encouraged by the "three black Graces—Law, Physic, and Divinity." Amongst a variety of writers upon this subject, I may refer the reader to the commencement of the second partition of old Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, in which he will find a variety of learned opinions upon this question. Nicholas Taurillus says that "common experience confirms to our astonishment, that magicians can work such feats, and that the Devil without impediment can penetrate through all the parts of our bodies, and cure such maladies, by means to us unknown." But, then, with regard to the lawfulness of such cures:—"It matters not," saith Paracelsus, "whether it be God or the devil, angels, or unclean spirits cure him, so that he be eased." In

“ If we wished to assign a particular rank to the phenomena which are produced in our days by the partizans of Animal Magnetism, we should place their cures immediately after those which result from religious exaltation, and far above all that can be produced by confidence in an ordinary remedy, however new, and however secret. The ardent zeal of the magnetizers, the almost supernatural marvellousness of the phenomena they describe, the nature of their processes, which require a long continued *recueillement*—all this is amply sufficient to explain the difference which exists to their advantage.”\*

We may all recollect something of the wonderful cures alleged to have been wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris in France, and of the acrimonious controversies to which the circumstances gave rise. By the friends of the Saint, these cures were ascribed to the miraculous interposition of Divine Power; whilst his enemies, in order to get rid of them, were forced into an utter denial of their reality. Both parties were completely blinded by false

opposition to such atheistical opinions, honest old Burton himself magnanimously contends,—“ much better it were for such patients that are so troubled, to endure a little misery in this life, than to hazard their soul’s health for ever; and (as Delrio counselleth) *much better die, than be so cured.*” This last opinion would probably be most popular among the faculty.

\* *Le Globe*; No. 89, 18th July 1826.

zeal, and both were most egregiously in the wrong. Some of these cures, at least, if not all, were undeniable; but they were no miracles, in the proper sense of the word. The learned Bishop of Salisbury, who had carefully investigated the subject, admits, that "whoever attentively weighs the evidence urged in support of some of them, must own that few matters of fact ever were confirmed by more unexceptionable testimony. They were performed openly, in the sight of the whole world; in the heart of one of the greatest cities in the universe; on persons whom every body could see and examine; whose diseases could not be counterfeited, because we have the certificates of the most eminent physicians who had previously attended or examined them; and whose recovery every inhabitant of the city of Paris could satisfy himself of, because they lived on the spot. And that the facts were examined into with all the art and address of the ruling part of the clergy, backed by the civil magistrate, is too notorious to admit of a dispute; as it is, also, that some of them could stand the examination, and remained undetected."\* Ac-

\* *The Criterion*, by John Douglas, D. D., Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

Scenes of a similar character again occurred in more recent times, and occasioned a renewal of the same discussions. I shall take the liberty of quoting the following observations upon the

cordingly, the Bishop very properly admits the reality of these cures, and justly ascribes them to the principles I have already noticed—religious enthusiasm, a lively faith, and unbounded confidence.

subject, by an ingenious writer, to whom I have already referred.

“ There has been lately discovered at Lyons an old tomb, which, right or wrong, is believed to be that of St Jubin. Hereupon, the imaginations of the pious have become exalted, and some diseased persons, anxious to experience the virtue of new relics, have found their complaints alleviated near this tomb. We are told that a woman, who had been suffering from paralysis, was completely cured. These circumstances have given great umbrage to some philosophers, the wrath of certain journalists has been kindled, and apparently to punish this woman for having been, or believed herself to have been cured, they have hastened to acquaint the public that she had become insane. It is difficult to perceive how this insanity could diminish the reality of her miraculous cure. In the mean time, the account appeared of importance, and was repeated in all the journals which espoused the same side ; which drew down upon the whole of them a positive contradiction on the part of the *Gazette Universelle de Lyon*, which, reasonably enough, defended the miraculous cure.

“ With regard to our liberals, why will they not allow the relics, and the newly discovered tomb of the saint, to produce in our days, the same effects which the relics and the tombs of all the saints have produced in all times ? St Jubin may well be permitted to do, for some time, at Lyons, that which St Paris did, during more than ten years, at Paris, in the middle of the 18th century—that which Prince Hohenlohe, all alive as he is, has been doing, since the commencement of the 19th century, throughout the whole extent of Catholic Europe. It is an incontestible fact, and demonstrated by the religious history of all times, that, whenever a lively faith in superior power was combined with firm confidence, surprising cures were the result. Why, then, obstinately deny them ? Assuredly, we ought not

In concluding these few observations upon the vast sanative influence of faith and confidence, I shall take the liberty of laying before my readers the following extract of a communication from a gentleman at the Havannah, which will be found in the *Monthly Magazine* for February 1820.

“Since my arrival, for about a year, I have witnessed the successive extinction of about four-fifths of those who have arrived from Europe. A terrible disorder—the *vomito negro*, or yellow fever—almost invariably attacks the newly-landed. In vain do I inquire what is the cause of this disease, and what are the remedies provided against it. The physicians of the country are as uninformed on this subject as I am; as evidently appears from the different prescriptions which they distribute, and which all tend to one common result—that of

to believe, upon light grounds, events which are almost always exaggerated by enthusiasm; but instead of feeling annoyed when similar accounts are published, philosophers would do well to investigate and ascertain the facts, to present them in their just degree of importance, and to enlighten the public on the subject of their nature and causes. I am much deceived if such conduct would not make a greater impression than a ridiculous exasperation, or stale raillery, which are more calculated to excite fanaticism, than to destroy it. It is time that science should frankly take possession of these miraculous cures, which are so evidently within its domain, and which constitute a very interesting chapter of that powerful influence of the moral over the physical nature of man, so frequently appealed to, and yet hitherto so little appreciated in its more curious results.”—*Le Globe, ut sup.*

conducting their unhappy patients to the grave. At the same time"—and to this passage I would especially direct the attention of the reader—"at the same time, *the Negro women are much more successful in their treatment of the fatal fever than the regular faculty ; they inspire confidence, which calms the patient, and then, probably, Nature does the rest.* The very captains, who have brought away the Negresses from the coast of Africa, are obliged to implore their benevolent assistance, and are frequently indebted for the preservation of their lives to those whom they have deprived of their country and their liberty."

Now, these Negro women were undoubtedly quacks, and, as such, I presume, would have been liable to prosecution and punishment, at the instance of the Faculty, in every civilized and well-governed realm. Yet the sanative processes, so successfully employed by them, would appear to have been truly Hippocratic; and it must be evident to all who are conversant with the subject, that they bore a striking resemblance to the magnetic treatment.\*

\* "The following account of the first appearance of the venereal disease is given by Villalba. When, in 1493, this previously unknown disease appeared at Seville, the king and queen, Ferdinand and Isabella, ordered their physicians to attend the persons afflicted with it in the hospital of San Salvador. Many physicians and professors laboured for seven or eight months,

I have said that faith and confidence are requisite conditions of the success of every important transaction of life, as well as of medicine and magnetism.\* This is a principle which scarcely requires illustration. What, I would ask, was the grand secret of the brilliant successes of all those great men, who, at different periods, have astonished the world by the almost never-failing accomplishing thousands of remedies without benefit. The famous physician Mæstro Francisco de Gebralion, and the celebrated Doctors Bodiga, Aragones, and Infantos, held councils, the result of which was a declaration that the disease was a scourge of Heaven, which attacked alike all ages and complexions, cities, and villages, and that all physical remedies had till then proved inefficacious; they were therefore of opinion, that every one who had greater experience should be allowed to undertake the cure of the disorder, and prayed the king to permit non-graduates to try their skill upon it. The consequence was, that a weaver actually cured most of the patients with a sort of ointment."—*Literary Gazette*, for February 18. 1832.

\* "We all know that, in undertaking any difficult task which requires moral energy, the confidence we have in our powers, and the hope of success, contribute much towards enabling us to surmount obstacles. When one body of troops marches to the attack of another, if it is well convinced of its superiority, if it has no doubt of obtaining the victory, it will possess a prodigious advantage over the enemy, even although the latter should be superior in numbers. When soldiers make an assault, we see them scale walls and clear ditches, which would certainly have arrested them, if they were not previously convinced that nothing could resist their impetuosity. Magnetism has for its principle a moral action; it is the will which darts forth the fluid as it impresses motion; and is it surprising that confidence should augment its energy?"—DELEUZE; *Defense du Magnetisme Animal*, p. 106.



ment of their splendid, their glorious, their wonderful achievements—the Alexanders, the Hannibals, the Cæsars, the Mahomets, the Tamerlanes, the Charlees, the Cromwells, the Frederics, the Bonapartes, &c. ? I answer, that it is to be found, in a great measure, in an unbounded confidence in their own powers, a firm, a lively faith, and an energetic, a despotic volition. In the words of the poet : *Possunt quia posse videntur*—they were capable of performing great things, because they had a strong, an unflinching faith in their own ability, and confidently looked for success in all their enterprises. The professors of Animal Magnetism will tell us, that these were all magnetic men—men who possessed, in an extraordinary degree, that nervous power, that determined volition, and that indomitable confidence, which gave additional vigour to all their energies, and enabled them to perform actions which, to ordinary mortals, might almost appear impossible. I may add, in the language of a noble living author, that “one of the surest marks of a great mind is the confidence with which it knows how to inspire others.”\*

I have already observed, I believe more than once, that our modern physiological systems betray far too great a leaning to materialism ; they treat of man as a merely passive being—as little

\* Lord Mahon, *History of the War of the Succession in Spain.*

more than a machine; while the study of his spiritual nature has been almost totally neglected.\* Yet the latter is, at least, equally interesting to the physician, and far more so to the philosopher. It makes us better acquainted with the various sympathies and susceptibilities of our being, and leads us to the discovery of the true springs of our actions, which will always be the more admirable, the farther they are removed from materialism and mechanism—the nearer they approach to the nature of the incorporeal, the spontaneous, the spiritual—the more immediately they proceed from our independent moral energies—the more manifestly they evince the dominion of mind over matter. *Si volueris magna operari*, says William Maxwell, one of the most ingenious of the predecessors of Mesmer, *corporeitatem a rebus pro posse deme, vel corpori de spiritu adde: Nisi aliquid horum feceris .....nihil unquam magni operaberis.*†

\* One great cause of this neglect may probably be found in the circumstance, that Physiology has been more cultivated by medical writers than by philosophers; and we are told by Hoffmann and Conringius that *Medico, qua Medicus, ignota est Anima.*

X † If you would accomplish great things, you must divest objects, as much as possible, of their materiality, or add spirit to matter: Unless you do one or other of these, you will never perform any thing great.

## CHAPTER VI.

**AFTER** the preceding, I trust not altogether unnecessary or uninteresting and uninteresting, episode upon the subject of those sympathetic and moral influences, which are occasionally operative in the cure of diseases—and which, if treated at the length their importance deserves, would probably occupy far too great a proportion of this publication ;—I shall now proceed to a much more extraordinary topic, and direct the attention of my readers to some very remarkable instances which have been recorded of the wonderful power of human volition, first, over the corporeal organism of the individual exerting it, and then over that of others.

The most surprising cures, indeed, are said to have been occasionally effectuated psychically, and, as it were, magically, without employing any tangible or ponderable remedy, or any visible medium, by the mere influence of the will and determination of the individual over the corporeal organs. The celebrated German metaphysician, Kant, wrote a small treatise, addressed to Dr Hufeland, upon the

power of mental resolution in overcoming painful sensations arising from some derangement of the animal economy; and he observed, that this power was most efficaciously exerted in the case of spasmodic affections. This observation has been confirmed by the experience of the animal magnetizers, who have occasionally witnessed cases of a similar description, and have themselves performed cures, by means of a strong effort of the will and resolution, without the employment of any manipulations, or, indeed, of any physical media whatever.

Passavant mentions, that he knew a lady who cured herself of spasms in this manner.—Her husband, to whom she was tenderly attached, always treated her with coldness and indifference whenever she was seized with any affection of this kind; and this circumstance induced her to exert a powerful effort of resolution, of which she was otherwise incapable, and in consequence of which she succeeded in effecting a complete cure.\* Brandis, principal physician to the king of Denmark, relates several cases of a similar description; in particular, one of a lady whom he cured of violent spasms, and another of a young man whom he cured of St Vitus's dance, by resolutely forbidding

\* *Untersuchungen über den Lebens Magnetismus und das Heilsehen.* Von Dr J. C. Passavant. Frankf. à M. 1821.

him to yield to the attack.\* The treatment resorted to by Boerhaave, in the case of the convulsive children in the Orphan-House at Haarlem, appears to have been of the same kind.

Indeed, there is a variety of instances upon record of the most marvellous and incredible influence of volition over the bodily organization, even in the case of such operations as cannot be conceived to depend, in any degree, upon the will of the individual. Thus, in Franklin's *Journey to the Polar Sea* (p. 157), a strange story is told of a man, who, after earnest prayer, became provided with milk, and actually suckled a child.

Bernier, in his *Ceremonies et Coutumes Religieuses* (tom. vi. p. 188), informs us, that voluntary somnambulism is frequent among the Indian Bramins and Fakirs, and that even the means of producing it are taught. In Avicenna's treatise *De Animalibus*, a case is reported of a man who possessed the power of paralyzing his limbs at pleasure, by an effort of volition. Cardanus relates of himself, that he could voluntarily place himself in a state of ecstatic insensibility.† St Austin, in his

\* Brandis, *Ueber psychische Heilmittel und Magnetismus*. Copenhagen, 1818.

† Quatuor mihi indita sunt a natura, quæ nunquam aperiri volui, et omnia (meo judicio) admiratione digna. Quorum primum hoc est, quod quoties volo, extra sensum quasi in ecstasim transeo, &c.—*De Rerum Varietate*, lib. viii. c. 43. Something similar

work *De Civitate Dei*, has recorded two cases of a similar description; the one of a man who could perspire when he wished it; and the other of a priest, Restitutus by name, who, whenever he pleased, could throw himself into a state of complete insensibility, and lie like a dead man.\*

One of the most extraordinary, the most circumstantial, and the most authentic instances which have been recorded, of the astonishing power of volition over the bodily organization, is that related by the celebrated Dr Cheyne in one of his medical treatises, † and which appears to have been verified by the most exact observation, and substantiated by the most irrefragable evidence. It is the case of a Colonel Townsend, who, as in the instance mentioned by St Austin, could die, to all

is related of that singular character Emanuel Swedenborg; and also, it is believed, of Jacob Behmen.

\* Illud multo est incredibilius, quod plerique fratres memoria recentissima experti sunt. Presbyter fuit quidam, nomine Restitutus, in parocia Calamensis ecclesie, quando ei placebat, rogatus aut ut hoc faceret ab eis qui rem mirabilem coram scire cupiebant, ad imitatis quasi lamentantis cujuslibet voces, ita se auferebat a sensibus, et jacebat simillimus mortuo; ut non solum bellicantes atque pungentes minime sentiret, sed aliquando etiam igne ureretur admoto, sine ullo doloris sensu, nisi post modum a vulnere; non autem obnitendo, sed non sentiendo non movere corpus, eo probatur, quod tanquam in defuncto nullus inveniebatur anhelitus; hominum tamen voces, si clarius loquerentur, tanquam de longinquo se audisse referebat.

† Cheyne, *English Malady*, &c.

appearance, at any time that he chose, and having lain for a considerable period in that state, could resuscitate himself by a voluntary struggle. "He could die," says Dr Cheyne, "or expire when he pleased, and yet, by an effort, or somehow, he could come to life again. He insisted so much upon our seeing the trial made, that we were at last forced to comply. We all three felt his pulse first: it was distinct, though small and thready, and his heart had its usual beating. He composed himself on his back, and lay in a still posture for some time; while I held his right hand, Dr Baynard laid his hand on his heart, and Mr Skrine held a clean looking-glass to his mouth. I found his pulse sink gradually, till at last I could not feel any by the most exact and nice touch. Dr Baynard could not feel the least motion in his heart, nor Mr Skrine perceive the least soil of breath on the bright mirror he held to his mouth. Then each of us, by turns, examined his arm, heart, and breath, but could not, by the nicest scrutiny, discover the least symptom of life in him. We reasoned a long time about this odd appearance as well as we could, and finding he still continued in that condition, we began to conclude that he had indeed carried the experiment too far; and at last we were satisfied that he was actually dead, and were just ready to leave him. This continued about half an hour. By nine

in the morning, in autumn, as we were going away, we observed some motion about the body, and, upon examination, found his pulse and the motion of his heart gradually returning: he began to breathe gently, and speak softly. We were all astonished to the last degree at this unexpected change, and, after some farther conversation with him and among ourselves, went away fully satisfied as to all the particulars of this fact, but confounded and puzzled, and not able to form any rational scheme that might account for it."

In the foregoing instances, we perceive the astonishing power which certain individuals appear to have possessed over their own bodily organization; and I am now going to bring under the view of the reader a still more incredible power, treated of by many authors, which is said to enable one individual, by an energetic effort of volition, to produce very extraordinary effects upon the corporeal organism of another. The existence of such a power was maintained by several ancient writers\*; and, in modern times, by a numerous sect of physicians and philosophers, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It would be tedious to attempt a minute examination of the various opinions of this numerous class of writers, and to point out their several coincidences. Much of that which they

\* Vide FIENUS, *De Viribus Imaginationis*.



assert or relate, may have been taken up too credulously, upon trust, and without due investigation; but still there are many things which they affirm upon their own experimental knowledge, or upon the credible testimony of others, and these deserve a serious consideration. Of these authors, I may mention, as the most eminent, Pomponatus, \* Rodolphus Goelenius, † Athanasius Kircher, ‡ Van Helmont, § Sir Kenelm Digby, ¶ William Maxwell, ¶¶ J. G. Burgrave, \*\* Sebastian Wirdig, ††

\* PETRUS POMPONATIUS, *De Inocantationibus*. Basil, 1567.

† ROD. GOELENII *Tract. de Magnet. Vuln. Curat.* Marburgi, 1608, et Francof. 1613.

‡ ATHAN. KIRCHER, *Magnes, sive de Arte Magnetica*. Colon. 1643, et Rom. 1654.—*Magneticum Naturæ Regnum, &c.* Amst. 1667.

§ VAN HELMONT, *De Magnet. Vuln. Curatione*. Paris, 1621.—See also the other works of this author.

¶ K. DIGBY, *Of the Cure of Wounds by the Power of Sympathy*. Lond. 1660.

¶¶ GUL. MAXWELL, *Medicinæ Magnet. Libri tres, &c.* Frankf. 1679,

\*\* J. G. BURGRAAVE, *Biolychnium, seu Lucerna vitæ, cui accessit cura morborum magnetica*. 1629. This work I have not seen; but I find it referred to by Kluge, under a title somewhat different.

†† SEBASTIAN WIRDIG, *Nova Medicina Spirituum*. Hamb. 1673. This also is a work which I have not been able to procure; but I find the following remarkable quotation from it on the title-page of a treatise, entitled *Mesmer justificé*: "Totus mundus constat et positus est in magnetismo; omnes sublunarium vicissitudines fiunt per magnetismum; vita conservatur magnetismo; interitus omnium rerum fiunt per magnetismum."—P. 178.

Joannes Bohnius, \* &c. All of these writers, and many others, assumed the existence of an universal magnetic power, by which they attempted to explain the dependence and reciprocal action of bodies, in general, upon each other, and, in particular, the phenomena of the vital organization. They also broadly and distinctly maintained the proposition, that the will or imagination of man, when energetically called into action, is capable of producing certain perceptible effects upon the organism of other living beings, even at a considerable distance.

This last proposition has been, perhaps, most clearly enunciated by Pomponatius and Van Helmont; and considering them as the representatives of the whole of this class of writers, I deem it sufficient to give an abstract of the opinions which they entertained upon the subject we are now investigating.

Pomponatius † assumes it as a fact generally acknowledged, that there are men endowed with

\* JOANNES BOHNIUS, *De Spirituum Animalium Medela*. Hamb. 1688.

To the list of authors given in the text, may be added, Jul. Cæs. Vaninius, *De Admir. Naturæ arcan.*; C. Agrippa ab Nettesheim, *De Occulta Philosophia*; Christopher Irving; N. Papin; Fludd, and a variety of others, who have either written expressly upon the subject, or, at least, incidentally alluded to it.

† Petrus Pomponatius was born at Mantua in 1462, and died in 1525. He was Professor of Philosophy at Padua.

the faculty of curing certain diseases, by means of an effluence or emanation, which the force of their imagination directs towards the patient. "When those," says he, "who are endowed with this faculty, operate by employing the force of the imagination and the will, this force affects their blood and their spirits, which produce the intended effects, by means of an evaporation thrown outwards." \*

He afterwards observes, that it is by no means inconceivable that health may be communicated to a sick person by this force of the imagination and the will, so directed; and he compares this susceptibility of health to the opposite susceptibility of the infection of disease. †

\* "Possibile est apud me, quod homo habeat talem dispositionem qualem diximus. Sic contingit, tales homines qui habeant hujusmodi vires in potentiâ, et per vim imaginativam et desiderativam cum actu operantur, talis virtus exit ad actum, et afficit sanguinem et spiritum, qui per evaporationem petunt ad extra, et producunt tales effectus."—Cap. iv. p. 44.

† "Incredible non est, etiam sanitatem posse produci ad extra ab anima taliter imaginante et desiderante de ægritudine."—P. 51.

"Quemadmodum aliquis potest infici et ægritudinem suscipere ab aliquo alio ex evaporatione, sic et aliquis secundum istum modum potest suscipere sanitatem."—P. 88.

Vaninius, in his work already referred to, has a passage to the same effect: "*Vehementem imaginationem, cui spiritus et sanguis obediunt, rem mentis conceptam realiter efficere, non solum intra, sed et extra. Ergo præpotentem animæ de valetudine cogitationem posse ægroto sanitatis aliquid impertiri.*"—L. iv. dial. 5.

In another passage, our author enumerates the conditions of the exercise of this faculty, in nearly the same terms as are employed by the modern magnetisers: and he adds, that the confidence of the patient contributes to the efficacy of the remedy.

It is necessary, says he, that he who exercises this sort of enchantment should have great faith, a strong imagination, and a firm desire to cure the sickness. But these dispositions are not to be found equally in all men. \*

There is also a curious passage in Maxwell upon this subject, which I take the liberty of subjoining: "*Imaginationem extra corpus operari clarum esse puto. Et quid quæso aliud est imagnatio quam, ut ita dicam, animæ manus, per quas illa sine corporis auxilio operatur.*"—*Med. Magnet.* l. i. cap. 2.

Here, too, I cannot avoid quoting a remarkable passage from Cornelius Agrippa ab Nettesheim, in which he asserts that it is possible for a man to communicate his thoughts to another, even at a great distance, and appeals to his own experience, as well as to that of others, for the truth of the fact: "Possibile est naturaliter, et procul omni superstitione, nullo alio spiritu mediante, hominem homini ad quamcunque, longissimam etiam vel incognitam, distantiam et mansionem, brevissimo tempore posse nuntiare mentis suæ conceptum: etsi tempus in quo istud fit non possit mensurari, tamen intra viginti quatuor horas id fieri omnino necesse est: et ego id facere novi, et sæpius feci. Novit idem etiam fecitque quondam Abbas Trithemius."—*De Occulta Philosophia*, lib. iii.

\* "Oportet præcantatorem esse credulum, et magnam fidem adhibere, et habere vehementem imaginationem et fixum desiderium, et circa unamquamque ægritudinem. Modo patet non omnes homines esse æqualiter dispositos."—P. 73.

It must not be concealed, however, that Pomponatus ascribes a much more comprehensive power to the magnetic virtue, than any other author whom I have yet met with; and he even goes so far as to say, that, in certain circumstances, it may render the very elements, and matter itself, subject to the commands of man.\*

There is no author of that age who appears to have so fully anticipated the modern discovery of Animal Magnetism, as Van Helmont;† indeed, in perusing some parts of his works, we might almost conceive that we were occupied with the lucubrations of some disciple of Mesmer. His treatise,

\* “Cum hominis animæ voluntas, et maxime imaginativa, fuerint vehementes, elementa, venti et reliqua materialia sunt nata obedire eis.”—P. 237.

† John Baptist van Helmont was born at Brussels in the year 1577, and died in 1644. He was educated for the profession of a physician, but spent the greater part of his life in chemical researches. He discovered the laudanum of Paracelsus, the spirit of hartshorn, and the volatile salts; and to him we owe the first knowledge of the elastic æriform fluids, to which he gave the name of *gas*, which they still retain. The science of medicine is also under considerable obligations to Van Helmont. But some of his most singular and original opinions are those which relate to our subject. His works were collected, some time after his death, and beautifully printed by Elzevir. —In speaking of Van Helmont, the learned Conringius says; “Helmontio multum debemus, quod philosophantium sui ævi errores acriter perstringendo, atque impugnando, excitavit torpentia ad naturalem philosophiam ingenia, et post Verulamium ad experimenta à nugacissimis quandoque ratiocinationibus revocavit.”—H. Conringii, *Introduct. in Univers. Art. Medic.* l. 23.

*On the Magnetic Cure of Wounds*, is, in this respect, particularly remarkable. It was intended as an answer to two authors, who had written upon the same subject—Goclenius, a physical philosopher then in considerable repute, and Father Robert, a Jesuit. The first had maintained the reality of the cures effected by the magnetic means, and ascribed them to natural causes. The latter did not deny these cures, but condemned them as proceeding from the devil.

Van Helmont shews that Goclenius had feebly defended the cause of truth; and he proves, in opposition to Father Robert, that there is nothing criminal or diabolical in the magnetic treatment, but that all the phenomena depend upon natural causes. "Magnetism," says he, "is an universal agent; there is nothing new in it but the name; and it is a paradox only to those who are disposed to ridicule every thing, and who ascribe to the influence of Satan all those phenomena which they cannot explain."\* He defines Magnetism to be "that occult influence which bodies exert over each other at a distance, whether by attraction or by impulsion."† The medium or vehicle of this influence,

\* Magnetismus, quia passim viget, præter nomen, nil novi continet; nec paradoxus nisi iis qui cuncta derident, et in Sata-næ dominium ablegant quæcunque non intelligant.

† Sic vocitamus eam occultam coaptationem qua absens in

he designates by the name of the *Magnale Magnum*, which he seems to consider as an universal fluid pervading all nature. It is not, he continues, a corporeal substance, capable of being condensed, measured, or weighed; but an ethereal, pure, vital spirit, or essence, which penetrates all bodies, and acts upon the mass of the universe. With regard to the human frame, he conceives that the seat of this magnetic influence is in the blood, and that it is called forth and directed by the will. Van Helmont occasionally gives to this influence the epithets of ecstatic and magical, using the latter word in its more favourable signification.\*

In the same treatise, the author proceeds to say, that he had hitherto delayed the communication of  
absens per influxum agit, sive trahendo vel impellendo fiat.—Sect. 69.

\* Igitur in sanguine est quaedam potestas ecstática, quae si aliquando ardente desiderio excitata fuerit, etiam ad absens aliquod objectum, exterioris hominis spiritum deducendo sit: ea autem potestas, in exteriori homine latet, velut in potentia; nec ducitur ad actum, nisi excitetur accensa imaginatione, ferventi desiderio, aut arte aliqua pari.—Sect. 76.

Eadem vero anima, magica virtute non nihil expergefata, extra suum ergastulum, in aliud distans objectum solo nutu agere posse, per media deportato; in eo nempe sitam esse totam basim magiae naturalis, nullatenus autem in ceremoniis variisque superstitionibus.—Sect. 122.

Postremo est virtus magica a corpore quasi abstracta, quae fit excitamento interioris potestatis animae, unde fiunt potentissimae procreationes et validissimi effectus, et per phantasiam suam agit, et quo spiritualior eo potentior.—Sect. 157.

a great mystery, viz. that there resides in man a peculiar energy, which enables him, by the mere force of his will and imagination, to act at a distance, and to impress a virtue, to exercise an influence, upon a very remote object.\* This power, he admits, is incomprehensible; but there are other powers and agents in nature which we are equally incapable of comprehending—such as the power of human volition over the corporeal organs. The union of the soul and the body, too, and their reciprocal influence upon each other, depend upon causes which we are unable to discover.†

Van Helmont also asserts, that we can impress upon another body the virtue with which we ourselves are endowed; that we can thus communicate to it certain properties, and make use of it as an intermediate agent for producing salutary effects. He maintains, for example, that several vegetable remedies derive a peculiar efficacy from the imagi-

\* *Ingens mysterium propalare hactenus distuli; ostendere videlicet in homine sitam esse energiam qua solo nutu et phantasia sua queat agere in distans, et imprimere virtutem, aliquam influentiam, deinceps per se perseverantem et agentem in objectum longissime absens.*—Sect. 158.

† To this may be added our ignorance of the causes of Gravitation, of the common Magnetism, of Electricity, &c. The day, perhaps, is not far distant, when the remarkable anticipation of Kant will be realised, and when it will be generally recognised and admitted, that all of these phenomena are the product of one single and simple principle, differently modified.



nation of the individual who gathers, prepares, or administers them; and this is quite consistent with the alleged experience of many of the modern professors of Animal Magnetism. But one of the most remarkable passages in this treatise is that in which the author explains the conditions necessary to the success of the magnetic treatment. "We have already observed," says he, "that all magical power lies dormant in man, and that it requires to be excited. This is invariably the case, if the subject upon whom we wish to operate is not in the most favourable disposition; if his internal imagination does not abandon itself entirely to the impression which we wish to produce upon him; or if he, towards whom the action is directed, possesses more energy than he who operates. But when the patient is well disposed, or weak, he readily yields to the magnetic influence of him who operates upon him through the medium of his imagination. In order to operate powerfully, it is necessary to employ some medium; but this medium is nothing unless accompanied by the internal action."\* All this—at least in its essential points—as we shall

\* *Diximus omnem fortassis magicam vim dormire et excitatione opus habere; quod perpetuo verum est, si objectum in quod agendum est non sit proxime dispositum, si ejus interna fantasia non prorsus annuat agentis impressioni, vel etiam si robore patiens sit par vel superior agentis; at contra, &c.—Sect. 172.*

afterwards see, is quite coincident with the modern doctrine of Animal Magnetism introduced by Mesmer, and established by the numerous experiments and observations of his successors.

There is nothing more striking, and probably to most persons, upon a first view, more incomprehensible, in the works of Van Helmont, and indeed of most of the early writers on the subject of Magnetism, than the vast and mysterious influence which they ascribe to the power of energetic and concentrated volition—an opinion which could hardly be founded but upon experience of the fact. In this respect, too, there appears to be a remarkable coincidence between their opinions and the doctrines and practice of the Magnetic School of Barbarin, which the reader will find explained in the sequel.

The will, according to Van Helmont, is the first of powers. It was by the will of the Almighty that the universe was created; it was by volition that motion was originally impressed upon all objects; it is the will existing in man, which is the principle of all his actions. Volition belongs to all spiritual beings; it is the more active and powerful in them, in proportion as they are disengaged from matter; and the energy with which it operates without the assistance of organs, is the essential characteristic of pure spirits. These positions

are laid down by our author in his treatise, entitled *Actio Regiminis*; where he repeats, in somewhat different words, the opinions which he had so often expressed in the work to which I have already so fully referred.\*

It seems unnecessary to take any notice of the theory upon which, in another treatise, Van Helmont endeavours to account for the phenomena to which he refers. It may be observed, however, that he there lays down more clearly a principle, which is implied in some of his preceding propositions, viz. that those who exert this magnetic influence, operate more or less powerfully according to the energy of the will; and that the effects of their operation may be impeded by the resistance of that which is operated upon. A magician† will operate with much more certainty upon weak than upon robust beings; because the power of operating effectually by means of volition has its limits, and he who possesses energy of mind can easily resist it.‡

\* Est ergo tertia actio spiritibus incorporeis propria, qui non requirunt ad agendum radium directum, nec aspectum subjecti, nec ejus propinquitatem, dispositionem aut colligationem; sed agunt solo nutu potestativo, longe vi influentiali efficaciore.—*Act. Regimin. Sect. 39.*

† This word might here be very properly translated *Magnetiser.*

‡ See Van Helmont's Treatise, *De Injectis Materialibus.*

It would be premature, perhaps, at present, to give any account of the observations and experiments of Van Helmont on the subject of the ecstatic, or magnetic, crisis. In the mean time, I may observe, that it appears quite evident from the whole works of this author, that he was not only perfectly well acquainted with the magnetic influence, but that he made use of it professionally, and placed great confidence in its effects. He himself, indeed, informs us, that when the plague was raging in the town of Brussels, he thought it his duty to seize the opportunity of instructing himself, and of being useful to others. He accordingly offered his services to attend the sick; neither the fatigue, nor the fear of infection, could abate his zeal, or extinguish his charity. "Perceiving," says he, "that most of the physicians deserted the sick, I devoted myself to their service, and God preserved me from the contagion. All, when they saw me, seemed to be refreshed with hope and joy; whilst I, supported by faith and confidence, persuaded myself that God would at length confer upon me the science of an adept."\*

These observations and opinions of Van Helmont, and other writers of his age, are exceedingly curious, and certainly deserved a careful experimental

\* *Promissa Auctoris*, col. iii. sect. 7.

investigation. But the style in which most of these treatises were written, was so shrouded in mystical expression; the vague and unsatisfactory theories, in which their authors delighted to indulge, tended so much to obscure the few facts which they really developed; and the opinions they announced were so much at variance with the common philosophical systems, as well as with the ordinary experience of life, that no attempts appear to have been subsequently made to ascertain the truth or falsehood of their principles by a fair appeal to the decisive test of scientific experiment. About that period, too, chemical science, and its application to medicine, began to be cultivated with great zeal, and prosecuted with eminent success; and it was not to be expected that much attention should be devoted to a subject so remote from the fashionable scientific pursuits of the age. On the contrary, the magnetic authors gradually came to be generally regarded as idle visionaries and contemptible empirics; they were placed in the same class with the astrologers and alchemists; their works were consigned to neglect and oblivion, or, at most, were only occasionally consulted by the curious, and referred to as striking instances of the hallucinations of the human intellect. Thus were the mystical volumes of these magnetic philosophers allowed to repose undisturbed, for a long period, amidst the

learned dust of our libraries, until, in recent times, when the subjects of which they treated again began to attract a considerable share of the attention of philosophers upon the Continent, and many of the most extraordinary opinions they maintained were almost daily receiving fresh confirmation from experience, they were sought after with avidity, drawn forth from their obscurity, carefully studied, and appealed to by the professors of Animal Magnetism in support of their principles and practice.

I am quite aware that attempts may still be made, by the incredulous, to get rid of these authorities in a short and easy way, by representing them as quacks, mystics, and visionaries—a charge which is frequently brought against all those individuals who maintain uncommon opinions, or who adopt a mode of practice different from that which is sanctioned by their professional brethren. But now we are enabled to subject the obnoxious tenets to the test of experiment; and in all cases it is surely more rational and philosophical to investigate the truth of certain opinions, and the reality or possibility of certain facts, than to evade all inquiry, and endeavour to excite prejudice by the employment of silly and preposterous ridicule, or by using opprobrious names. If Van Helmont merits the name of quack, what physician of su-

perior attainments can hope to escape the imputation of quackery? Opinions supported by evidence, however, cannot be invalidated by any such irrational mode of opposition; and many of the opinions I have noticed are not only corroborated by some striking natural analogies, but confirmed by unquestionable and unequivocal facts. Similar opinions, too, were embraced, at a later period, by authors of a much more popular character, who did not hesitate to maintain them openly, and to give good reasons for the faith that was in them. As an instance, I shall take the liberty of laying before the reader an exceedingly curious passage from the works of a very ingenious old English writer, which, I think, will sufficiently prove that some, at least, of the facts which are said to have been elicited by the magnetic practice, are not quite such mere visionary chimeras of modern mystics, as many persons, not conversant with the subject, may have been induced to suppose. The author to whom I allude is Joseph Glanvill, with whose entertaining and instructive writings some of my readers may be acquainted; and who relates, as will be perceived, with great confidence, the following remarkable and amusing story.

“That one man should be able to bind the thoughts of another, and determine them to their

particular objects, will be reckoned in the first rank of impossibilities :\* Yet by the power of advanced imagination, it may very probably be effected ; and story abounds with instances. I'll trouble the reader but with one ; and the hands from which I had it, make me sure of the truth on't. There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who being of very pregnant and ready parts, and yet wanting the encouragement of preferment, was by his poverty forced to leave his

\* Dr Bertrand mentions two very curious facts, falling within his own experience, which seem to prove that somnambulists are capable of penetrating the thoughts of others with whom they are placed *en rapport*. In performing upon his first somnambulist, the process by means of which he was accustomed to awaken her, with a firm determination, at the same time, that she should not awake, she was instantly seized with violent convulsions. On his enquiring what was the matter, she answered, " How ! you bid me awake, and you dont wish me to awake."

The other example is the following :—A poor woman, uneducated and unable to read, was said to be capable, in somnambulism, of understanding the meaning of words, of the signification of which she was ignorant when awake ; and, in point of fact, she explained to Dr Bertrand, in the most exact and ingenious manner, what we ought to understand by the word *encephalon*, which he proposed to her ; a phenomenon which, unless we assume the hypothesis of an accident as difficult to admit as the supposed faculty, can only be explained by acknowledging that this woman read, in the very thoughts of the doctor, the signification of the word about which she was interrogated.

This fact of the intimate *rappor*t existing between the operator and the patient, may afford us a key to many of the mysteries of Animal Magnetism ; but it is not the less extraordinary in itself.—BERTRAND, p. 439.



studies there, and to cast himself upon the wide world for a livelihood. Now, his necessities growing daily upon him, and wanting the help of friends to relieve, he was at last forced to join himself to a company of *vagabond Gypsies*, whom occasionally he met with, and to follow their trade for a maintenance. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem, as that they discovered to him their mystery; in the practice of which, by the pregnancy of his wit and parts, he soon grew so good a proficient, as to be able to out-do his instructors. After he had been a pretty while well exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. The scholars had quickly spied out their old friend among the Gypsies, and their amazement to see him among such society had well-nigh discovered him; but by a sign he prevented their owning him before that crew; and taking one of them aside privately, desired him with his friend to go to an inn, not far distant thence, promising there to come to them. They accordingly went thither, and he follows. After their first salutations, his friends inquired how he came to lead so odd a life as that was, and to join himself with such a cheating, beggarly company? The scholar-Gypsy, having given them an account

of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, told them that the people he went with were not such imposters as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of Imagination, and that himself had learnt much of their art, and improved it further than themselves could. And to evince the truth of what he told them, he said he'd remove into another room, leaving them to discourse together; and upon his return tell them the sum of what they had talked of; which accordingly he performed, giving them a full account of what had passed between them in his absence. The scholars being amazed at so unexpected a discovery, earnestly desired him to unriddle the mystery; in which he gave them satisfaction, by telling them that what he did was by the power of Imagination, his Fancy *binding* theirs; and that himself had dictated to them the discourse they held together while he was from them: That there were warrantable ways of heightening the Imagination to that pitch as to bind another's; and that when he had compassed the whole secret, some parts of which he said he was yet ignorant of, he intended to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned."\*

\* Lord Bacon (long before Glanvill), in his *Sylva Sylvarum* (Century x. sect. 946), tells the following story confirmative of the same principle.

Such is the story told by Glanvill, an author perfectly worthy of all credit, who afterwards maintains that this strange power of the imagina-

“ I related one time to a man that was curious and vain enough in these things, that I saw a kind of juggler, that had a pair of cards, and would tell a man what card he thought. This pretended learned man told me, it was a mistaking in me ; ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ It was not the knowledge of the man’s thought, for that is proper to God, but it was *the enforcing of a thought upon him, and binding his imagination* by a stronger, that he could think no other card.’ And thereupon he asked me a question or two, which I thought he did but cunningly, knowing before what used to be the feats of the juggler. ‘ Sir,’ said he, ‘ do you remember whether he told the card the man thought, himself, or bade another to tell it ?’ I answered, as was true, that he bade another tell it. Whereunto he said, ‘ So I thought ; for,’ said he, ‘ himself could not have put on so strong an imagination ; but by telling the other the card, who believed that the juggler was some strange man, and could do strange things, that other man caught a strong imagination.’ I hearkened unto him, thinking for a vanity he spoke prettily. Then he asked me another question. Saith he, ‘ Do you remember, whether he bade the man think the card first, and afterwards told the other man in his ear what he should think ; or else that he did whisper first in the man’s ear that should tell the card, telling that such a man should think such a card, and after bade the man think a card ?’ I told him, as was true, that he did first whisper the man in the ear, that such a man should think such a card : upon this the learned man did much exult and please himself, saying, ‘ Lo, you may see that my opinion is right ; for if the man had thought first, his thought had been fixed ; but the other imagining first, bound his thoughts.’ Which, though it did somewhat sink with me, yet I made it lighter than I thought, and said, I thought it was confederacy between the juggler and the two servants ; though, indeed, I had no reason so to think, for they were both my father’s servants, and he had never played in the house before.”

tion is no impossibility, and contends that this extraordinary influence seems no more unreasonable than that of "one string of a lute upon another, when a stroke on it causeth a proportionable motion in the sympathizing consort, which is distant from it, and not sensibly touched."\*

In the sequel of this publication, I shall have occasion to bring forward many stories equally strange, marvellous, and incredible—stories grave-

\* A still more curious observation occurs in Gardiner's *Music of Nature*:—"It has been found that, in a watchmaker's shop, the time-pieces or clocks, connected with the same wall or shelf, have such a sympathetic effect in keeping time, that they stop those which beat in irregular time; and if any are at rest, set a-going those which beat accurately."

The sympathy between stringed musical instruments, alluded to by Glanvill, although more familiar to us, is perhaps as extraordinary as any of the phenomena of Animal Magnetism. This subject brings to my recollection the following affecting anecdote, related by Kotzebue in his *Journey to Paris*. A young lady used to play upon the harpsichord, while her lover accompanied her on the harp. The young man died, and the harp had remained in her room. After the first excess of her despair, she sank into the deepest melancholy, and some time elapsed before she could again sit down to her instrument. At last she did so—gave some touches, and, hark! the harp, tuned alike, resounded in echo. The poor girl was at first seized with a secret shuddering, but soon felt a kind of soothing melancholy. She became firmly persuaded that the spirit of her lover was softly sweeping the strings of the instrument. The harpsichord, from this moment, constituted her only pleasure, as it afforded to her mind the certainty that her lover was still hovering about her. One of those unfeeling men, who want to know and clear

ly told by learned, intelligent, and sober men, physicians, professors in universities, and others, all of them persons of unimpeachable veracity, having no conceivable motive for falsehood, honestly relating what fell under their own observation, or that of other persons equally credible, boldly publishing the results to the world at large, anxiously challenging criticism, and loudly calling upon physicians and philosophers to investigate the alleged facts. Let my readers, however, remember that I do not insist upon their conceding a blind and implicit belief to any one of these stories : I only request them to pause and inquire before they determine to reject them ; and to exercise a little of that academical scepticism, which teaches us to suspend our judgment until we have obtained rational conviction.

up every thing, once entered her apartment ; the girl instantly begged him to be quiet, for at that very moment the dear harp spoke most distinctly. Being informed of the amiable illusion which overcame her reason, he laughed, and, with a great display of learning, proved to her by experimental physics, that all this was very natural. From that instant, the young lady grew melancholy, drooped, and soon after died !

## CHAPTER VII.

**THERE** are some persons whose minds are so sceptically constituted, as to find great difficulty in bringing themselves to believe any uncommon fact, or series of facts, however incontrovertibly established by evidence, unless they are placed in a situation, at the same time, to give a rational and apparently satisfactory explanation of the principles upon which they depend. Such persons generally continue sceptics both in regard to religion and to philosophy. But the explanation required by these individuals is by no means essential to our conviction of the reality of any phenomenon, nor, in many cases, can it be easily afforded. Facts are every day believed upon observation, or upon testimony, which we should be exceedingly puzzled, if called upon to account for. In the Introduction to this work, I have shewn that there are facts which had been observed during thousands of years, before even their existence was generally admitted. A common proverb tells us that "there is nothing new but what has been forgotten."

The phenomena of Animal Magnetism are of a

nature so very extraordinary, that it is exceedingly difficult to account for them upon any rational and satisfactory hypothesis. The difficulty, too, has been greatly increased by the very irrational manner in which the subject has been hitherto treated by many learned men, and especially by professional physicians. With such, for a long period, the great and sole object appears to have been to get rid of the facts altogether, by argument, by ridicule, by contempt, or by any means by which they might be brought into general discredit. They determined not even to investigate, far less to admit the reality of that which, had they taken the trouble to make the slightest inquiry, they would have found completely demonstrated. The advocates of the doctrine, on the other hand, were compelled, by this obstinate hostility and incredulity of the learned, to multiply their experiments and observations, until they had obtained such a body of evidence as should constitute an insubvertible basis for their system. This, at least, they must be admitted to have accomplished in the most satisfactory manner; for it is quite impossible for any candid inquirer to study even one half of what has been written upon this subject, without having complete conviction forced upon his mind. Indeed, scepticism, in this matter, is now confined entirely to those persons who obstinately refuse to inquire.

These circumstances, however, have not been very favourable for the philosophical investigation of the subject. The individuals who, at first, addicted themselves to Magnetism, were better qualified for the accurate observation of facts, than for the construction of satisfactory theories. The opponents, too, certainly demanded too much, when they insisted upon such explanations. Mathematical reasoning is wholly inapplicable to the phenomena in question, nor could they be explained upon the ordinary principles of Physics or Physiology. There were serious difficulties in the way of the investigation of these facts, the nature of which I cannot better express than in the language of Dr Roget.

“ In the investigation of the powers which are concerned in the phenomena of living beings,” says that distinguished philosopher, “ we meet with difficulties incomparably greater than those that attend the discovery of the physical forces by which the parts of inanimate nature are actuated. The elements of the inorganic world are few and simple; the combinations they present are, in most cases, easily unravelled; and the powers which actuate their motions, or effect their union and their changes, are reducible to a small number of general laws, of which the results may, for the most part, be anticipated and exactly determined by calcula-



tion. What law, for instance, can be more simple than that of gravitation, to which all material bodies, whatever be their size, figure, or other properties, and whatever be their relative positions, are equally subjected; and of which the observations of modern astronomers have rendered it probable that the influence extends to the remotest regions of space? The most undeviating regularity is exhibited in the motions of those stupendous planetary masses, which continually roll onwards in the orbits prescribed by this all-pervading force. Even the slightest perturbations occasioned by their mutual influence, are but direct results of the same general law, and are necessarily restrained within certain limits, which they never can exceed, and by which the permanence of the system is effectually secured. All the terrestrial changes dependent on these motions partake of the same constancy. The same periodic order governs the succession of day and night, the rise and fall of the tides, and the return of the seasons; which order, as far as we can perceive, is incapable of being disturbed by any existing cause. Equally definite are the operations of the forces of cohesion, of elasticity, or of whatever other mechanical powers of attraction or repulsion there may be, which actuate, at insensible distances, the particles of matter."

After observing that all these phenomena, to-

gether with those of Chemistry, of Light, of Heat, of Electricity, and of Magnetism, "have been, in like manner, reduced to laws of sufficient simplicity to admit of the application of mathematical reasoning;" and that, "to whatever department of physical science our researches have extended, we every where meet with the same regularity in the phenomena, the same simplicity in the laws, and the same uniformity in the results;" the author proceeds:

"Far different is the aspect of living Nature. The spectacle here offered to our view is every where characterised by boundless variety, by inscrutable complexity, by perpetual mutation. Our attention is solicited to a vast multiplicity of objects, curious and intricate in their mechanism, exhibiting peculiar movements, actuated by new and unknown powers, and gifted with high and refined endowments. In place of the simple combinations of elements, and the simple properties of mineral bodies, all organic structures, even the most minute, present exceedingly complicated arrangements, and a prolonged succession of phenomena, so varied and so anomalous, as to be utterly irreducible to the known laws which govern inanimate matter."—Dr Roget's *Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. i. pp. 7, &c.

"If we are to reason at all, we can reason only

upon the principle, that for every effect there must exist a corresponding cause; or, in other words, that there is an established and invariable order of sequence among the changes which take place in the universe. But though it be granted that all the phenomena we behold are the effects of certain causes, it might still be alleged, as a bar to all further reasoning, that these causes are not only utterly unknown to us, but that their discovery is wholly beyond the reach of our faculties. The argument is specious only because it is true in one particular sense, and that a very limited one. Those who urge it do not seem to be aware that its general application, in that very same sense, would shake the foundation of every kind of knowledge, even that which we regard as built upon the most solid basis. Of causation, it is agreed that we know nothing; all that we do know is, that one event succeeds another with undeviating constancy," &c.

This is sound philosophy, and the most zealous Animal Magnetist could not object to its application to his doctrine. The phenomena of the living organism are unquestionably much more difficult of explanation than those of inorganic matter; but this difficulty ought not to deter us from collecting and endeavouring to classify the facts. And, after all, what do we know of the common Magnetism, of Electricity, of Galvanism, &c. but the facts

which have been elicited by the labours of experimental inquirers, and the laws which have been deduced from their generalization? And would it be considered a sufficient reason for the absolute rejection of any of these facts, or of a whole class of facts, that we are still ignorant of the principle upon which they depend, and perhaps may never become acquainted with it? If we carry the undisputable phenomena of Animal Magnetism along with us, and regard them as calculated to open up many new and interesting views in the physiology of man, it is quite possible that, in proportion as we advance in our knowledge of the subject—in proportion as we succeed in ascertaining the conditions of their reality—we may ultimately become enabled to give as satisfactory an explanation of the principles upon which these phenomena depend, as in the case of any other science, or as is compatible with the limited stretch of our faculties. But to discourage all investigation is not the best way to extend our knowledge of Nature.

In order, in some measure, however, to gratify those who require some theoretical explanation of all natural phenomena, and to shew to all that the professors of Animal Magnetism are not entirely destitute of rational principles and scientific analogies in confirmation of the doctrines they maintain, I shall briefly direct the attention of the reader to

the following philosophical view of the subject. Whether it shall be thought satisfactory or not, I beg leave to remind him, that the reality of the facts does, in no degree, depend upon the accuracy of the explanation.

I formerly observed, that it is through the medium of the nerves that the vital principle appears to be acted upon—that they are the source of the animal affectability—the connecting link between matter and mind; and that many eminent physicians and physiologists had found themselves compelled to assume the fact of the permeability of the nerves, and also the existence of a nervous fluid, without any actual demonstration of their reality. Indeed, this supposition of a nervous secretion and circulation, with its utmost difficulties, seems much more rational and satisfactory than any other hypothesis with regard to their nature and action. It has been maintained, upon speculative grounds, by the ablest physiologists, and enables us to account for many phenomena which appear to be otherwise inexplicable. But this hypothesis has been almost reduced to a certainty, in recent times, by the interesting researches of Reil, Autenrieth, Humboldt, Burdach, Bichat, Beclard, and others, who have gone far towards the actual demonstration of the fact of the secretion and circulation of a nervous fluid, and even rendered it extremely

probable that this circulating fluid is capable of an external expansion, which takes place with such energy as to form an atmosphere, or sphere of activity, similar to that of electrical bodies. If it be said that this is a mere hypothesis, yet it must be admitted that it is an hypothesis, not only very probable in itself, but calculated to enable us to give a scientific explanation of many facts which cannot be accounted for upon any other principle.\* Moreover, this hypothesis may now be considered as having been almost completely demonstrated by the researches of the celebrated French anatomist and physiologist, Bécclard. This skilful experimentalist having cut a nerve of considerable size, adjoining a muscle, which induced paralysis in this part, perceived the contractile action reappear, when he approached the two ends of the nerve at the distance of three lines. It is quite evident

\* I have somewhere read of late, although I cannot, at this moment, refer to my authority, that a recent experimentalist had succeeded in injecting the nerves with some fluid. I believe there are other physiologists who maintain, that the nerves are merely the conductors of some fluid from the brain and spinal chord to the different parts of the body. This hypothesis would equally suffice for our explanation.

Dr Roget (*Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 367), observes that "the velocity with which the nerves subservient to sensation transmit the impressions they receive at one extremity, along their whole course, exceeds all measurement, and can be compared only to that of electricity passing along a conducting wire."

here, that an imponderable substance, that is to say, a fluid of some kind, traversed the interval of separation, in order to restore the muscular action. Another experiment of the same philosopher not only proves the existence of this fluid, but seems also to demonstrate its striking analogy to electricity. Having frequently placed a magnetic needle in connexion with the extremity of a divided nerve, he constantly perceived the deviation of the pole of the needle, caused by the reciprocal attraction of the two opposite fluids.\* To all this may be added the experiments which have been made with regard to the action of Galvanism upon dead men and other animals; as also the galvanic phenomena exhibited by a pile composed of alternate layers of brain and muscle.

Farther: It appears, says Dr Ure, that the gal-

\* I do not know in what work of Beclard's these experiments are detailed, but I find them alluded to in a memoir transmitted to the Royal Academy of Berlin, by Dr Leonard, entitled:—*Magnetisme, son histoire, sa theorie, &c.* published at Paris in 1834. Some experiments are also said to have been made, with a view to demonstrate, more conclusively, the intimate analogy that exists between the nervous fluid and electricity; but it is sufficient for me to have drawn attention to the subject, and I shall, therefore, leave the farther prosecution of it to more competent inquirers. I may, however, refer the reader to Haller's *Elements of Physiology*, to Mr Abernethy's *Physiological Lectures*, and to Dr W. Philip's work on *The Vital Functions*. The experiments of the last mentioned author are particularly curious and interesting.

vanic energy is capable of supplying the place of the nervous influence, so that, while under it, the stomach, otherwise inactive, digests food as usual. Certain experiments clearly shew a remarkable analogy between galvanic electricity and nervous influence, as the one may serve as a substitute for the other. When the lungs are deprived of nervous influence, by which their function is impeded, and even destroyed, when digestion is interrupted, by withdrawing this influence from the stomach, these two vital functions are renewed by exposing them to the influence of the galvanic trough.\*

If, we are justified, then, in assuming the existence of this nervous fluid—whether secreted or merely conducted by the nerves—of its analogy to

\* I understand that Professor Keil of Jena, has recently made some very interesting experiments tending to demonstrate the susceptibility of the nervous system for the magnetic influence, and the efficacy of the magnet in the cure of certain diseases. The result of these experiments, I believe, was communicated by the Professor to a meeting of the Royal Society of London, about the beginning of the year 1833.

Some of the late German Journals give an account of a singular machine, recently invented by a person of the name of Portius, at Leipsic, called the *Psychometer*. The object of this machine is to indicate the temperament and character of each individual. At first, we should be apt to look upon such a machine as a mere toy, but it is seriously spoken of, and described as exhibiting great accuracy. It is constructed upon the principle of a supposed affinity existing between the nervous fluid of the animal body, and the electric and magnetic fluids.



the other known, active, and imponderable fluids, and of its capability of external expansion, as in the case of electricity; it does not appear to be a very violent or unwarrantable proceeding to extend the hypothesis a little farther, and to presume that it is also capable of being transmitted or directed outwards, either involuntarily, or by the volition of one individual, with such energy as to produce certain real and perceptible effects upon the organism of another, in a manner analogous to what is known to occur in the case of the *Torpedo*, the *Gymnotus electricus*, &c. Indeed, the fact of the actual transference of nervous or vital power, in certain circumstances, from one individual to another, is now admitted by some of our own most eminent medical writers, amongst others by the learned Dr Copland. In his *Dictionary of Practical Medicine*, this experienced physician observes, that “this fact”—that of the transference of vital power—“however explained, has been long remarked, and is well-known to every unprejudiced observer; but,” he adds, “it has been most unaccountably overlooked in medicine.” The learned Doctor gives several instances which, along with others recorded in history, leave no doubt of the fact. Now, admitting that such a transference takes place—where, I would ask, does this vital power reside, and how is the transference in question effected? Is it not

pretty evident that this power resides in the nerves, and that it is transmitted from one individual to another, in certain circumstances, in consequence of some connexion between their nervous systems, and in a manner analogous to heat or electricity? And do not these circumstances give a powerful confirmation to the views of the Animal Magnetists?

Physical science presents us with many facts analogous to the transference in question. Take, for example, the case of the transmission of heat. "If two solid bodies" — I quote from Dr Lardner — "if two solid bodies, having different temperatures, be placed in close contact, it will be observed that the hotter body will gradually fall in temperature, and the colder gradually rise, until the temperatures become equal. This process is not, like radiation, sudden, but very gradual; the colder body receives increased temperature slowly, and the hotter loses it at the same rate. Different bodies, however, exhibit a different facility in this gradual transmission of heat by contact. In some it passes more rapidly from the hotter to the colder; and in others, the equalization of temperature is not produced until after the lapse of a considerable time." Similar phenomena are exhibited in Magnetism, Electricity, Galvanism, &c.; and there appear no good grounds for holding it to be impos-

sible, or improbable, that nervous energy may, in certain circumstances capable of being ascertained, be transmitted from one animal body to another, in some analogous manner; on the contrary, experience, without the aid of theory, seems to afford us abundant proofs that such a transmission does occasionally take place.

The foregoing theory, if acknowledged to be founded upon just *data*, might enable us to account for many of the more ordinary phenomena of Animal Magnetism, and particularly for the sanative efficacy of the processes; considering this efficacy to depend upon a transference of vital energy, and a consequent restoration of the vital functions, through the medium of the nervous system, to a more healthy state of action. There appears to be nothing unreasonable in supposing that health may be communicated in the same manner as disease; and, as in all morbid states of the system, the nerves are always more or less affected, if not the actual seat of the malady, it does not seem irrational to conclude, that their tone may be restored by the action of a healthy organism, and fresh vigour thus diffused throughout the whole frame. Some medical writers, I believe, have spoken of a contagion of health, as well as of disease.\*

\* It is inconceivable that any persons acquainted with the most ordinary phenomena of physical science, and especially

It is but fair to observe, however, that there is a variety of other magnetic phenomena—and these

with the changes produced upon inanimate bodies by apparently trivial and inadequate causes, should obstinately deny the possibility of the facts of Animal Magnetism—the effects, perhaps, of analogous causes upon the living organism—without condescending to make any inquiry into their reality. To all such I would beg leave to submit the following observations.

The superposition of two different metals produces Galvanism. The friction of a plate of glass generates Electricity. M. Haüy discovered that the simple pressure of the hand upon a tourmaline rendered it electrical. The point of contact confers all its force upon attraction. Iron attaches itself to the magnet by the point of contact, and becomes magnetic itself by friction: it follows the direction of the magnet at a distance, even across intermediate solid bodies. The touch develops caloric. Friction causes the wheels of a carriage to take fire. Phosphorus emits light in consequence of friction. Chemistry teaches us that friction causes surprising detonations. The union of hydrogen with an elementary substance which has been called *cyanogen*, produces the *hydrocyanic acid*. This acid, more commonly called the *Prussic*, possesses the most singular physical properties. It freezes at  $15^{\circ}$ , and begins to boil at  $26^{\circ}$ —an interval so short, that, if a single drop be exposed to the air, the evaporation of a part produces a sufficient degree of cold to freeze the rest. In its pure state, this acid is the most deadly poison. The smallest drop, placed on the tongue of an animal, kills it like a bullet or a thunderbolt. The same substance which, when combined with hydrogen, produces this frightful poison, when united with oxygen produces fulminating powders.

Iron filings, immersed in a liquid as cold as itself, instantly produce a violent ebullition, and vapours susceptible of inflammation. Nay, this metal, solid as it is, is afterwards destroyed, in some measure, by the above fluid, and unites with it in such a manner, as to pass with it through the closest filter. Another

by much the most extraordinary—as will be seen in the sequel, of which this theory does not imme-

limpid liquor suddenly dissolves this union, and causes the iron to fall to the bottom of the vessel in the form of an impalpable powder.

M. Döbereiner, by projecting a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen on a small mass of spongy platinum, observed that this simple contact combines the two gases, and produces such a degree of heat as to redden the metal—thus producing a red heat by means of a blast of cold air. Oxygenated water, when thrown upon very oxidable metals (such as arsenic), causes them to burn and emit light—thus presenting the curious spectacle of combustion produced by water: a single drop is sufficient to produce the effect. On the contrary, when thrown upon gold, silver, or platinum, the oxygen suddenly becomes free, with an explosion, and restores the water to its former state, without producing any alteration on the metal. The oxides of the same metals produce this effect with still greater force.

Baron Cuvier observes, that “all those innumerable substances whose action maintains the admirable and complicated spectacle of animated nature, those substances which, independently of the body which has produced them, are still so astonishing in the variety of their effects, whether as delicious aliments or formidable poisons—whether as objects or instruments of such numerous and such various arts,—only differ from each other, at least in the eye of chemistry, in the proportion of three or four elements. A little more or a little less of hydrogen or of carbon, is all the distinction we at present see between that strychnia which kills like thunder, and those savoury and wholesome fruits which constitute the delicacies of our tables; and, what is still more astonishing, it is all that distinguishes that blood which conveys nutrition and life to all parts, those nerves which connect us with external nature, those muscles which give us dominion over her. These are effects greater than their apparent causes; which gives us sufficient reason for believing that they have causes which are still concealed from our view.”

diately appear calculated to afford any satisfactory or complete explanation. With regard to these, therefore, it will be best, perhaps, for us, in the mean time, to avoid all premature theory, and to content ourselves with collecting, arranging, and classifying the facts, until we shall, at length, become enabled to obtain some insight into the principle upon which they depend. For this reason, I shall proceed, in the next, and some of the subsequent chapters, to present the reader with an historical deduction of the magnetic doctrines and practice, and shall afterwards endeavour to make him acquainted with all the more remarkable phenomena which have been elicited by experiment.

By simple contact, cotton and woollen articles are infected, and carry contagion from one hemisphere to another, &c.

Now, with what efficacy may not the same, or, at least, analogous causes, act upon living bodies, on irritable and sensible parts, on the nerves, the brain, the phrenic plexus, &c.? At all events, why so readily admit the reality of the phenomena in the one class of cases, and so obstinately deny it in the other? Are not both equally susceptible of proof? Do they not equally depend upon evidence? Are not their causes equally obscure?

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN all ages, and amongst all nations, phenomena similar to those which are now known to be produced by Animal Magnetism have been occasionally observed. The ancient writers, indeed, are full of allusions which, when carefully examined, leave no room to doubt, that some knowledge of these processes, probably, and certainly of these susceptibilities, obtained in early times. Amongst other inexplicable phenomena, how are we otherwise to explain, in any thing like a satisfactory manner, the ancient oracles, the prophetic dreams, and the cures produced by the touch of the priests in the Temples of Health, which popular belief immediately ascribed to the miraculous influence of some beneficent presiding deity? At a subsequent period, indeed, the reality of these facts was either entirely denied, or the singular effects in question were attributed to imagination and delusion, or to the impositions of the priesthood, aided by the ignorance and credulity of the people. Other causes, into which I am unwilling to enter at present,

tended to strengthen and perpetuate the scepticism entertained upon this subject. I may observe, however, that to deny a fact is not to refute it, nor can it be invalidated by ascribing it to an erroneous or inadequate cause. Many of those miracles, as they were called, were probably just as real as those said to have been performed at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, and in other instances, and may be considered as depending upon the principles I formerly explained. And since the discoveries which have been made during the practice of Animal Magnetism, it has appeared exceedingly probable to many learned inquirers, that these phenomena were not the offspring of fraud and deception, but that they depended upon a knowledge of certain principles, which was afterwards obscured or lost amidst the decline of those institutions by which it had been cherished.

Yet this knowledge does not appear to have been totally lost: There occur, in the works of Greek and Roman authors, occasional expressions, which cannot well be explained, unless upon the supposition, that some memory, at least, of these very ancient practices had been preserved by tradition.

In the following verses of Solon, we have, so far as I have been able to discover, the earliest and most direct testimony to the practice of manipulation, as a sanative process, to be found in an-



tiquity. It seems surprising that they should have hitherto escaped the notice of all the writers upon Animal Magnetism, many of whom have exercised great diligence in collecting the various allusions to this process which occur among the ancients.

Πολλὰ κινεῖ δ' ἐξ ἐλίγης ἐδύτης μέγα γίγνεται ἄλγος  
 Κοῖα ἂν τίς λύσαιτ' ἤπια φάρμακα δούς.  
 Τὸν δὲ κακαῖς νόσοισι κυκώμενοι ἀργαλίαις τε  
 Ἀψάμενος χυροῖν, αἴψα τίθησ' ἰγυῖ.

SOLON, *apud Stobæum*. \*

The following remarkable expressions occur in the *Amphitryo* of Plautus: *Quid, si ego illum tractim tangam, ut dormiat*. These expressions are evidently used euphemistically or ironically, for "What if I should knock him down;" but we can hardly fail to perceive that there is here an obvious allusion to some method of setting persons asleep by a particular process of manipulation; and, accordingly they are so explained, in a note upon this passage, in Taubmann's edition of Plautus.†

\* Stanley, in his *History of Philosophy* (1666), has given us a very competent translation of these verses:

"The smallest hurts sometimes increase and rage  
 More than all art of physic can assuage;  
 Sometimes the fury of the worst disease  
 The hand, by gentle stroking, will appease."

† The words of Taubmann are these:—*Tractim tangam, ut dormiat*. *Perbelle videtur ludere, translatione a nutricula ducta,*

In the following verses of Martial, the process in question is not merely alluded to, but pretty fully described. They occur in B. iii. Ep. 82, and appear to refer to some refinement of luxury.

Percurrit agili corpus arte tractatrix,  
Manumque doctam spargit omnibus membris.\*

Sprengel, in his learned *History of Medicine*, informs us that, in chronic affections, Asclepiades of Bithynia, who acquired so much reputation, as a physician, at Rome, recommended frictions, to be continued until the patient fell asleep, which sleep he considered as very salutary. Tacitus and Suetonius have preserved an account of two remarkable magnetic cures, which were performed by the Emperor Vespasian, at Alexandria. †

Among the ancient Oriental nations, the cure of diseases by the application of the hands appears to have been well known. The Chaldean priests are said to have practised this mode of treatment; as

quæ pusiones palma leniuscule demulcent ut dormiant. Taubmann's Commentary on Plautus was published in 1612.

\* There is also a passage in Seneca's Epistles, in which this process seems to be alluded to, although the meaning, perhaps, may be considered ambiguous. Quidni ego feliciorum putem Mucium, qui sic tractavit ignem, quasi illum manum tractatori præstitisset.—Ep. 66. The Latin words *Tractator* and *Tractatrix* seem to imply the knowledge and practice of some art of this kind among the Romans.

† Tacit. *Hist.* iv. 81.—Suet. in *Vespas.* vii. Sects. 5; 6.

also the Indian Bramins, and the Parsi. According to the accounts of the Jesuit Missionaries for the year 1763, the practice of curing diseases by the imposition of the hands, has prevailed in China for many ages. The theory of Animal Magnetism, indeed, appears to have been known in the East long before it was ever thought of in Europe. It is said that there are individuals in Asia who make the practice of that theory their profession, and that these persons are persecuted by the Mollahs.

When we reflect that, after the fall of the Roman Empire, literature, science, the arts, medicine, &c. took refuge in the monasteries, might we not be led to suspect that many of the secrets and practices of the ancient Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans, which had always been confined to the temples, may have passed into the monasteries which succeeded them, and that in them the magnetic medicine had been mysteriously preserved? Indeed, we have pretty good evidence that this was actually the case. Thiers tells us that Protogenes, priest of Edessa, cured the children, his pupils, by prayer and *the touch of his hand*; and that the monk, John, had received from God the gift of curing the gout, and of replacing dislocated limbs. The monk, Benjamin, cured all kinds of diseases by *the touch of his hand*, and anointing with holy oil, &c.\*

\* THIERS; *Traité de Superst.* l. vi. ch. 4.

Petrus Thyraeus, the Jesuit, in his work entitled *Dæmoniacy, hoc est de Obsessis, &c.* refers to a number of cures performed by ecclesiastics, by the imposition of the hands, and by other means analogous to the magnetic.

If we admit, to any extent, the efficacy of these manipulations, and give any degree of credit to what has been alleged in regard to the efficacy of human volition, we shall have the ready means at hand of explaining, in a pretty satisfactory manner, many of those extraordinary cases which have served as a foundation for the popular belief in witchcraft, sorcery, possession, &c.—a belief which has led to many absurdities in speculation, and occasioned many enormities in practice. Some learned persons, indeed, have expressed an utter scepticism with respect to the foundation of the belief in question, considering it as entirely delusive; some have treated the whole subject as a matter for ridicule; while others have attempted to account for such of the phenomena as they conceived to be undeniable, upon principles which are altogether inadequate and unsatisfactory. If, however, upon a more minute and unprejudiced investigation of the powers and processes of Nature, and a more thorough examination of the physiological and psychological principles upon which they depend, it

should appear that the phenomena, which have occasioned so much ridicule, doubt, and discussion, may be justly ascribed, partly to sympathetic susceptibility, to certain reciprocal influences of organic and inorganic bodies upon each other; partly to a certain disposition, or idiosyncrasy, of the nervous system, and probably, in some instances, to a diseased state of the animal organism;—would not this tend to dissipate, in a great measure, the clouds which have hitherto enveloped this mysterious subject, and assist us in evolving principles, which, by controlling alike the rash incredulity of scepticism and the irrational errors of superstition, could not fail to conduct us to a more profound knowledge, and more accurate appreciation of these apparently anomalous occurrences, and thus prove highly interesting and advantageous to the study of the philosophy of man?

Some curious facts respecting the great confidence which the North American Indians place in the professors of the magical art, will be found in Hearne's Journey. Such is said to be the influence of these professors, that they appear to be capable of curing the most serious complaints without resorting to any physical means, and that the fear of incurring their malignity plunges individuals into diseases which often terminate fatally. One of these Indians, Matonabbi by name, conceiving that

Hearne was in possession of supernatural powers, requested him to kill, by magic, a man against whom he entertained a deadly hatred. To oblige him, Hearne, without dreading any bad consequences, drew some figures upon a piece of paper, and gave it to Matonabbi, advising him to make it as public as possible. Matonabbi's enemy, who enjoyed perfectly good health, scarcely heard of the paper, when he became melancholy, refused food, drooped, and died in the course of a few days!

Here we have a very simple case, in which we can have little difficulty in ascribing the whole effect produced, primarily, if not solely, to the influence of the imagination. But even here, it is conceived, we must presume that the imagination exerted a real and most remarkable action upon the nervous system of the individual. To this power, indeed—the imagination—as we shall see in the sequel, many learned persons were, at one time, disposed to attribute all the phenomena of Animal Magnetism. But there is a vast number of cases, as will appear hereafter, which do not admit of being explained upon this hypothesis.

The following case, in some of its features, bears a striking resemblance to the effects of Magnetism. It is quoted from the newspaper report of a trial which took place at the Taunton Assizes, on the 4th of April 1823, before Mr Justice Burrough.

Elizabeth Bryant, aged 50, with her two daughters, Elizabeth, aged 22, and Jane, aged 15, were charged with maliciously assaulting an old woman, Ann Burgess, a reputed witch, under the following circumstances:—It appears that Elizabeth Bryant, the younger, had been afflicted with fits, which were supposed to have been occasioned by the influence of some malignant spirit; and a noted sorcerer in the neighbourhood was resorted to by the mother for advice. The conjuror, in order to break the charm, gave an amulet to secure the wearer against witchcraft, and prescribed some medicines to be taken internally, and also a paper of herbs to be burned with certain ceremonies and incantations. But this was not all; for the prisoners were actually possessed with the horrible notion, that, in order to dissipate the charm effectually, it was necessary to draw blood from the witch. Accordingly, having fixed upon the prosecutrix as the individual by whom the young woman was bewitched, they took an opportunity of making an assault upon her, and of drawing blood from her arm by lacerating it dreadfully with a large nail. The prisoners were convicted, and had sentence of imprisonment.

This trial is curious, as affording an instance of the rude belief in witchcraft, still prevalent, it would appear, in some remote parts of the country.

But there are some farther circumstances mentioned in the newspaper report of the case, which are more to our purpose.

The fits with which the young woman was afflicted are not very circumstantially or technically described. It is said that, "when worked upon, she would dance and sing, just as if she was dancing and singing to a fiddle, in a way that there was no stopping her before she dropped down, when the fiend left her. Whilst the fit was upon her, she would look *wished* (wild or frightened), and point at something, crying, '*There she stands! there she stands!*' One of the witnesses said that she felt for the girl very much, and that her state was 'very pitiable.'" It likewise appeared that she had been subject to these fits for twelve months.

But the conclusion of the report is most remarkable. It is said that, "as the preparations were taken by the ignorant creatures, it could not be ascertained what they were, whether medicinal, or *mere rubbish, as is most probable*. But we are positively assured, that, *after the rites were all performed*, such was the effect upon the imagination of the girl, who fancied herself possessed, that *she has not had a fit since*."

Had it not been for the brutal assault upon the old woman, this case would have been a very innocent one, and would merely have added another



instance to the many already on record, of the efficacy of the psychical, or, as some would probably call them, the *magnetic* remedies.

Philosophical medicine was a subject much cultivated by the physicians of a former age; but seems now much neglected by the profession, as Dr Heberden remarks in his *Commentaries*. It seems to have been now almost entirely superseded by a mere empirical practice. Upon the subject of the psychical or magnetic remedies, just alluded to, however, I must beg permission to make a quotation from a work by an eminent foreign physician, whose talents and experience entitle his observations to be treated with great attention and respect.

“It is a proof,” says Dr Ziermann,\* “of partial and narrow views, which constitutes a great and a just reproach to medical science in our days, that

\* Steiglitz's *Ideen über den Thierischen Magnetismus*. *Beleuchtet von Dr J. C. L. Ziermann*. Hanover, 1820.

Dr Ziermann, I believe, was for many years in the military service of Great Britain. The above work was written in answer to a publication, upon the same subject, by Dr John Stieglitz, Physician to the King at Hanover, which appeared there in 1814. In his work, Dr Stieglitz had pretty fully admitted the reality of the greater part of the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, and did not even pretend to deny the efficacy of the treatment as a remedy in diseases—nay, he even went so far as to recommend it in all *desperate* cases; but his book, upon the whole, was composed in a hostile spirit, and it was evident that he viewed the magnetic practice with considerable prejudice and professional jealousy.

its professors should conceive that all diseases must be cured merely by medicinal preparations. This opinion certainly betrays as great a deficiency of science and experience, as is objected to those who rely exclusively upon the efficacy of the magnetic manipulations. That there are great masters in medicine—in the art of curing diseases by the administration of drugs—is no proof to the contrary; for they would have been much greater masters of their art, had they not themselves limited their means. They would have restored to health many of those patients whom they now dismiss as incurable; and they would cure many patients more rapidly, and more effectually, than they now do. Every means that can be used as a remedy, without greater disadvantages than the disease itself, is a sanative and an auxiliary, and, as such, ought to be employed by the physician. He ought not to be ignorant of the psychical remedies, which are intimately interwoven with the doctrine of magnetism. By psychical remedies, I understand not merely the art of curing mental diseases by means of tangible and ponderable drugs, ——— but the art of operating upon the spiritual powers and capacities of man, upon the heart and understanding, the temper, character, modes of thinking, and prejudices,—which may be done in a variety of ways, by words, gestures, signs, and actions, according

to the mental disposition and constitution of the individual ; so as to affect the invisible vital functions, or the basis of the phenomenal life, and thus produce salutary changes in the diseased organization. How this is effectuated, indeed, we know not ; but that it is effectuated is certain, for we have experienced it.

“ The physician, therefore, must not be a mere dealer in medicines ; he must also understand how to operate in a salutary manner upon his patients without drugs, or by employing them only in part ; and if he does not know how, or neglects to do this, he does not possess, or does not exercise, his art in its whole extent ; and were he even the greatest master of medicine in the world, still he is not the more perfect physician which he might be. All really great physicians have acknowledged this truth, and applied it in practice. Along with the use of drugs, they have employed the psychical remedies, in the sense in which I have used the expressions. Hence, too, we can explain how physicians possessed of moderate medical attainments, but endowed with much intuitive or acquired knowledge of human nature, and, on the other hand, men of great medical skill, have, with very insignificant medicines, been fortunate in operating cures throughout their whole lives. In vain, perhaps, would Boerhaave have exhausted the whole

magazine of antispasmodic drugs, even to alleviate the convulsions with which the children in the Haarlem Orphan-house were seized. A few words from his lips were sufficient to produce a perfect cure upon the spot.”\*

In the following chapter, I propose to bring under notice some instances of individuals, who are

\* Another eminent German physician makes the following excellent observations on the *Medicina Psychica*.

“ It is a much more difficult matter to apply the psychical method of cure, than to write a prescription. Dr Kreysig says, in his classical work on the *Diseases of the Heart*: Psychological medicine cannot be comprehended in words or rules; it presupposes a theoretico-practical knowledge of the human heart, which it is the imperative duty of the physician to acquire, and the first rule for its application is this:—Obtain the entire confidence of the patient by thy whole conduct, so that he firmly relies upon thy power and thy will to relieve him. When the physician has accomplished this, and knows how to preserve the advantage by his intellectual and moral character, he constitutes himself a beneficent ruler and guardian of the mind of his patient; and this he must do, because all patients resemble children in mind, and require a conductor. In this first maxim lies the whole secret of psychical medicine, whose deeply penetrating effects will always remain an enigma even to ourselves. By the application of it, there arises a real rapport between physician and patient, or a certain spiritual connexion, which inspires the patient with the hope of that cure which the physician anticipates, before the reasons for this hope and anticipation are clearly perceived. This is the *αἰσθησις* of our art, which must always render it equally beneficent and important.

See Remarks by Dr Müller, Physician to the Court at Würzburg, in the *Zeitschrift für die Anthropologie*, edited by Dr Nasse. Vol. i. p. 197.

known to have cured diseases, and to have produced various remarkable phenomena upon the human organism, by means analogous to the magnetic, previous to the discovery of Animal Magnetism, or without any knowledge of its principles.

## CHAPTER IX.

ABOUT the middle of the seventeenth century, there appeared in England a certain gardener, of the name of Levret, an Irish gentleman Valentine Greatrakes, and the notorious Dr Streper, who cured, or pretended to cure, various diseases, by stroking with the hand. Their proceedings excited considerable sensation at the time ; but no attempt appears to have been made by men of science, at that period, to ascertain the precise state of the facts, or to investigate the subject physiologically ; on the contrary, the effects of their treatment soon came to be regarded by some as a mere piece of jugglery, and by others as the consequence of a peculiar virtue specially conferred by Nature upon these individuals.\*

\* The learned Pechlinus, in his work, entitled, *Observationum Physico-Medicoarum libri tres*, Hamburgh, 1691, has preserved a pretty full account of Greatrakes ; and there is also extant a treatise said to have been written and published by that singular individual himself, entitled, *A Brief Account of Mr Valentine Greatrakes, &c.* London, 1666.

The efficacy of the treatment adopted by Greatrakes, is at-

The method of Greatrakes consisted in applying his hands to the diseased parts, and rubbing gently downwards. This is very similar to the most common and most simple process adopted by the present magnetizers; and it is remarkable, that the effects produced by this treatment appear to have borne a striking analogy to some of the most ordinary phenomena of Animal Magnetism, viz. increased excitement, different kinds of excretions, alvine evacuations, vomiting, &c. No mention, however, is made of sleep or somnambulism in the accounts given of the cures performed by Greatrakes; whether it be that he did not produce these phenomena, or that he did not particularly observe them. It is remarked, indeed, by Deleuze, and by other writers upon Animal Magnetism, that somnambulism rarely appears when it is not sought to be excited, and that it may take place without being observed, as actually occurred to some of the early disciples of Mesmer.

Many interesting particulars relative to Greatrakes have been related by Joseph Glanvill—an

tested by a number of the most respectable witnesses (amongst others, by that celebrated experimental philosopher, and truly pious Christian, Mr Boyle); who also bear ample testimony to the simplicity of his manners, the general excellence of his character, and his reverence for the principles of religion. The philosophic Cudworth was among his patients, and had firm faith in the efficacy of his treatment.

author to whom I formerly referred—to whom they were communicated in letters from Dr G. R. (George Rust), Lord Bishop of Derry in Ireland. These all represent him as a simple, unpretending man, and sincerely pious. With regard to his cures, the Bishop says, “I was three weeks together with him at my Lord Conway’s, and saw him, I think, lay his hands upon a thousand persons ; *and really there is something in it more than ordinary ; but I am convinced it is not miraculous. I have seen pains strangely fly before his hands, till he hath chased them out of the body—dimness cleared, and deafness cured by his touch ; twenty persons, at several times, in fits of the falling sickness, were in two or three minutes brought to themselves, so as to tell where their pain was ; and then he hath pursued it till he hath drawn it out at some extreme part : Running sores of the king’s evil dried up, and kernels brought to a suppuration by his hand : Grievous sores of many months’ date in a few days healed : Obstructions and stoppings removed ; cancerous knots in the breast dissolved, &c.*”

“But yet,” continues the Bishop, “I have many reasons to persuade me that nothing of all this is *miraculous*. He pretends not to give testimony to any doctrine ; the manner of his operation speaks it to be natural ; the cure seldom succeeds without reiterated touches, his patients often relapse, he



fails frequently, he can do nothing where there is any decay in nature, and many distempers are not at all obedient to his touch. So that, I confess, I refer all his virtue to his particular temper and complexion; and I take his spirits to be a kind of elixir and universal ferment, and that he cures (as Dr M. expressed it) by a *Sanative Contagion*."

To these particulars communicated by the Bishop of Derry, Glanvill himself afterwards adds, "that many of those matters of fact have been since critically inspected and examined by several sagacious and wary persons of the Royal Society, and other very learned and judicious men, whom we may suppose as unlikely to be deceived by a contrived imposture, as any others whatsoever."

In short, the evidence in support of the processes and cures of Greatrakes appears to me to be as satisfactory and unobjectionable as is possible in the circumstances of the case. A mere denial cannot invalidate the facts so strongly attested, and the evidence is far beyond the reach of sophistry.\*

\* Since the above was written, I have seen a very curious pamphlet by Henry Stubbe, Physician at Stratford-upon-Avon, containing *An Account of Mr Greatarick and his Miraculous Cures*, with the appropriate motto, *Non ideo negare debet apertum, quia comprehendendi non potest quod est occultum*. This author, an eye-witness in part, confirms, from his own experience and that of others, all that has been said of Greatrakes in the text. The pamphlet was addressed to the celebrated Dr Thomas Willis. "I do not," says he, "relate unto you the reports of interested

A great many years afterwards, there appeared a still more extraordinary character, in the person of the German exorcist, John Joseph Gassner. Gassner was born, in 1727, at Bratz, near Pludenz, in Suabia, and became Catholic minister at Clösterle, in the bishopric of Chur. Having taken up a notion that most diseases arose from demoniacal possession, and could be cured by exorcism, he commenced by curing some of his parishioners

monks and friars concerning things done in monasteries and private cells: An infinite number of the nobility, gentry, and clergy of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, persons too understanding to be deceived, and too honourable and worthy to deceive, will avow, that they have seen him publicly cure the lame, the blind, the deaf, the perhaps not unjustly supposed demoniacs and lepers; besides the asthma, falling sickness, convulsion fits, fits of the mother, old aches and pains." After relating some of his own observations on the cases he had witnessed, Dr Stubbe proceeds, "I considered that there was no manner of fraud in the performances, that his hands had no manner of medicaments upon them, . . . . . nor was his stroking so violent, as that much could be attributed to the friction. I observed that he used no manner of charms or unlawful words; sometimes he ejaculated a short prayer before he cured any, and always, after he had done, he bade them give God the praise." Now, where is the imposture in all this?

I find from the *Life of Flamsteed*, recently published, that that celebrated astronomer had also been a patient of Greatrakes; and although he does not seem to have himself derived much benefit from the treatment, yet he, too, bears ample testimony to the reality of the cures performed upon others, and to the general efficacy of the processes. Divines, physicians, and philosophers, therefore, and those cotemporaries and eye-witnesses, all unite in giving the most unequivocal evidence in favour of Greatrakes.

in this manner, and excited considerable sensation in the neighbourhood. He went first to reside with the Bishop of Constance, and afterwards, in 1774, to the Archbishop of Ratisbon at Elwangen, where he performed a number of astonishing cures, especially among patients affected with spasmodic and epileptic complaints. The power which he appears to have possessed and exercised over the organism of his patients would be absolutely incredible, were it not supported by the most ample and most respectable evidence. A public officer took regular and copious minutes of his procedure, which were attested by many individuals of the first rank and the highest respectability. The phenomena which occurred assuredly were of the most extraordinary character; the facts, however, so far as I am aware, never were denied, nor attempted to be refuted, at the time; although, at a subsequent period, persons who had not witnessed the treatment, and could not explain these phenomena to their own satisfaction, found it most convenient, as is usual in such cases, to throw discredit upon the whole procedure, and to ascribe the effects alleged to have been produced entirely to quackery and imposture.\*

\* A full account of Gassner and his proceedings will be found in one of the volumes of the German Archives of Animal Magnetism (*Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus*).

A number of other instances might be adduced of persons who, without any knowledge of Magnetism, have cured diseases by the touch of the hand, believing themselves to have been specially endowed with this virtue. Deleuze, on the authority of credible persons, mentions a shoemaker of Auxerre, of the name of Dal, who operated efficaciously, in this manner, upon persons affected with the toothach, sprains, &c. He would accept of no remuneration ; and he even alleged, that if he once took payment, he should no longer be able to operate with success.

In the German *Archives of Animal Magnetism* (vol. i. No. 3), there is an extract of a letter from Silesia, dated 22d July 1817, giving an account of a magical or magnetic doctor, of the name of Richter, who had cured many sick and infirm persons merely by means of manipulation. He was visited, it is said, by multitudes, from ministers of state and noblemen down to the lowest beggars ; and he cured them all indiscriminately and gratuitously. He refused every kind of recompense ; and when any thing was given, it was immediately handed over to the poor. The government had investigated his conduct and procedure, and granted him protection. He is afterwards described as a man of good substance, an innkeeper at Royn, near

Liegnitz, of a healthy and vigorous constitution, and the best reputation. Some account of this man will be found in the second volume of Kausch ; *Memorabilien der Heilkunde*.

There was also another natural magnetizer in Germany, in recent times, of the name of Grabe, a groom, I believe, by profession, of whom I have read some published accounts. He appears to have possessed great powers of curing diseases by manipulation, and was very indefatigable and disinterested in exercising them. Although a man of perfectly good character and active beneficence, his proceedings gave great umbrage to the Faculty, at whose instance he suffered continual persecution.\* At the same time, he was patronized by some medical men and other respectable individuals, who bore ample and satisfactory testimony to the propriety of his conduct, and the efficacy of his treatment.

There are, doubtless, other instances of indivi-

\* Nothing can be more absurd and disgraceful than such persecution. When facts are attested by evidence, it is surely more rational to examine them philosophically, than to attempt to invalidate them by discreditable means. False statements of facts can never gain any permanent credit ; but when such statements are opposed, not by reason, but by ridicule and persecution, a considerable bias in their favour is naturally generated in the minds of all sober, and serious, and disinterested inquirers. No doctrine, probably, was ever thoroughly eradicated by the persecution of its adherents.

duals who exercised similar powers; but great pains appear to have been always taken, upon such occasions, by sceptics and interested persons, to ridicule, disparage, and discredit their proceedings, and to represent themselves as mere impostors. If we carefully and impartially weigh the evidence, however, by which the reality of their cures is attested, we cannot fail, I think, to find a strong confirmation of the propositions laid down by the old magnetic writers, relative to the sanative efficacy that may be exerted by one individual over the organism of another.

But it was not until towards the conclusion of the eighteenth century, that this most interesting inquiry was systematically revived, and that, after an ample series of experimental investigations, the remarkable efficacy of this mode of treatment by manipulation was fully developed, and firmly established by induction. For this discovery—if such we may be permitted to call it—the world is principally indebted to a man, whose character, motives, and actions have been painted in such opposite colours, and whose merits have been so variously appreciated, that, were we to draw our inferences merely from a perusal of the writings of his partizans and his opponents, without any serious and impartial examination of those labours upon which his reputation, good or bad, must ultimately

rest, we should find it difficult to determine, even at the present day, whether we ought to consider him as one of the greatest benefactors to science, and to the human race in general, or as one of the most impudent and most successful scientific impostors who have ever contrived to practise upon the credulity of mankind.\*

\* The greatest caution is requisite in perusing the statements of the opponents of Mesmer. The partial and hostile spirit is everywhere apparent, and sometimes degenerates into absolute malignity. Even the most sober of them appear to be more desirous of throwing discredit upon the system, than of boldly meeting and fairly investigating the facts. I am not aware that the slightest stigma has been attached to the moral character of Mesmer; and there can be no doubt that he was thoroughly impressed with a perfect conviction of the truth and importance of his discovery. The same conviction accompanied him in his retirement from the world, as fully appears from the accounts given of him by individuals who visited him in his latter days.

## CHAPTER X.

FREDERICK ANTHONY MESMER, a native of Switzerland, was born upon the 23d of May 1734. In his youth, he came to Vienna, in very needy circumstances, for the purpose of studying physic ; and after having attended the lectures of Van Swieten and De Haen for several years, and taken his degree of Doctor of Medicine, he settled in that capital as a practising physician, and placed himself in a situation of independence by an advantageous marriage. From his youth upwards, he is said to have manifested a decided bias towards the uncommon and the marvellous ; and his favourite employment was to search after the almost forgotten works of the old mystical writers, particularly those which treated of astrology, which he studied with great attention and earnestness. The consequence of this was, that, upon the occasion of his promotion, in the year 1766, he wrote and publicly defended an inaugural dissertation *On the Influence of the Planets upon the Human Body*. This treatise drew down upon him the almost universal



ridicule of his professional brethren, who regarded him, from that period, as a strange and eccentric visionary ; and it is probable that this first display of his natural bias injured his character as a physician during the whole of his subsequent career. But the only effect of this treatment upon Mesmer himself, was to render him still more ardent and enthusiastic in the prosecution of his favourite studies.

His theory of the influence of the stars upon the human body was founded upon the assumed existence of a certain subtile element, or essence, pervading all nature (the ether of Newton) ; and this element he at first thought to have discovered in electricity, until, by repeated experiments, he became convinced of the insufficiency of that principle to explain the phenomena.

After a variety of fruitless efforts, he at length, in the month of November 1773, resorted to the magnet, to which his attention had been particularly called by the Jesuit Maximilian Hell, Professor of Astronomy at Vienna\* ; for which rea-

\* Hell was born at Chemnitz in Hungary in the year 1720, and entered at an early age into the order of Jesuits. From his youth, he devoted himself to the study of astronomy and experimental philosophy. In 1745-46, he assisted Father J. François, who had the charge of the Jesuits' Observatory at Vienna, in his observations, and took an active part in promoting the establishment of an institution for experimental physics

son, the latter subsequently claimed for himself the merit of the discovery of the magnetic remedy. Mesmer was the more readily induced to believe that he should be enabled to accomplish his object by means of the magnet, as many previous writers had not only proved its efficacy upon the human body, but had ascribed to it an extensive influence over universal nature.

He now proceeded to apply artificial magnets

in that city. Having taught the mathematics for some years at Clausenberg in Transylvania, he was recalled to Vienna, to fill the situation of astronomer and keeper of the Observatory. From 1757 to 1786, he published his yearly *Ephemerides*, which form a very interesting collection for the astronomer. Count Bachoff, the Danish ambassador at Vienna, urged him to undertake the task of observing the transit of Venus in Lapland; and, for this purpose, Hell set out in the month of April 1768. After accomplishing his purpose, he returned to Vienna in August 1770. Of his subsequent connexion with Mesmer, some notice has been taken in the text. Hell died at Vienna on the 14th of April 1792, after having contributed greatly to the advancement of astronomical science. His works, besides the *Ephemerides* above mentioned, are numerous. Among these are, *Tabulæ Solares N. L. de la Caille, cum suppl. reliquar. tabular.* 1763; *Tabulæ Lunares Tob. Mayer, cum suppl. D. Cassini, de Lalande, et suis*, 1763; *De Transitu Veneris ante discum Solis die 3tio Jun. 1769*, *Wardahusii in Finnmarkia observato*, 1770; *De parallaxi Solis ex observatione transitus Veneris anni 1769*. 1773, &c.

It does not appear that Hell can justly claim much of the merit due to the discovery of Animal Magnetism. He may, no doubt, have originally suggested the use of the mineral magnet, to which he always continued to ascribe the remedial efficacy; whereas the experiments of Mesmer, as will be seen in the sequel, ultimately led to a very different result.

(which his friend Hell prepared for him in various forms) to diseased parts of the human body. He afterwards brought the affected parts into permanent connexion or affinity with his magnets, and had at length the pleasure of witnessing the most satisfactory results. These results of his experience he published to the world in a *Letter to a Foreign Physician on the Magnetic Remedy*. Upon this occasion, however, he got involved in a controversy with his friend Hell; but after some explanations, the parties became reconciled.

As several individuals had been relieved from the most obstinate complaints by this treatment, some of whom had been induced to communicate accounts of their cure to the public through the medium of the press, and as other physicians, besides Mesmer, now resorted to the same practice, and experienced the same satisfactory results; the new remedy could not fail to attract considerable attention, although there were some who could perceive no particular advantage in it, whilst others totally denied its efficacy.

The magnetic remedy, indeed, was not generally sanctioned or patronized by the physicians of Vienna; and Mesmer experienced so much calumny and persecution on account of the novelty and singularity of his practice, that he resolved to withdraw from that capital. Accordingly, in the years

1775 and 1776, he made travels of discovery into Bavaria and Switzerland, and performed several remarkable cures, both in private circles, and in the public hospitals at Bern and Zurich. Upon this occasion, too, he is said to have paid a visit to the famous exorcist Gassner, at Ratisbon.

Upon his return to Vienna, in order to be enabled to prosecute his practice with more secrecy, and less interruption, he established an hospital in his own house, where he received destitute sick persons, whom he subjected to the magnetic treatment.

Hitherto, Mesmer had always made use of the magnetic rods in operating upon his patients, and he believed that the remedial efficacy of the treatment was the consequence of a certain virtue inherent in the mineral magnet. In the course of his experiments, however, he was now led to form a very different conclusion. \*

\* ENNEMOSER (p. 30.) says, that Mesmer was led to the discovery of Animal Magnetism by the following circumstance. Being present on one occasion when blood was drawn from a patient, he found a remarkable difference in the flowing of the blood when he approached or retired. Having afterwards repeated the experiment, the same phenomenon was manifested. Hence, he was induced to conclude, that his person was endowed with this magnetic influence, which may have been stronger in him than in other men, as different pieces of iron or steel may possess different degrees of magnetic power. I do not re-

He observed that, in the case of nervous patients, in particular, he was enabled to produce a variety of phenomena of a very peculiar character, which were not reconcileable with the usual effects of the magnet. This induced him to suppose that his magnetic rods, perhaps, did not operate merely by attraction, but that they, at the same time, served as the conductors of a fluid emanating from his own body. This conjecture seemed to him to be converted into a certainty, when he became satisfied, by repeated experiments, that he could produce the very same effects without using the magnet at all, by merely passing his hands from the head of the patient towards the lower extremities, or even by making these motions at some distance from the body of the patient ; and that he could also communicate to inanimate objects, by merely rubbing them with his hand, the power of producing similar effects upon such nervous patients as came in contact with them. \*

member to have met with this remark in any of Mesmer's own writings, but it is possible I may have overlooked it.

\* The disciples of Mesmer, therefore, could be at no loss, upon their own principles, to account for the efficacy of Perkins's Metallic Tractors, which, at one time, made so much noise in this country. They were, in fact, nothing else than a modification of Animal Magnetism ; and being themselves merely conductors, it was of no essential consequence whether they were made of metal, or (as Dr Haygarth's) of any other conducting substance. Yet, if we may give credit to some of the

Partly swayed by the fact ascertained by previous experiments, that, in like manner, by re-

more recent writers upon Animal Magnetism, there is a peculiar virtue in certain metals, which is capable of affecting the human frame in various ways. But into this subject we have no occasion to enter at present.

The history of Perkinism, however, and of its alleged refutation by Dr Haygarth, affords strong collateral evidence, if any such were wanted, in confirmation of the reality of Animal Magnetism.

Perkins invented certain instruments called *Metallic Tractors*, with which he is admitted, even by his enemies, to have frequently relieved pain, and performed remarkable cures. In order to refute Perkinism, Dr Haygarth made *wooden tractors*, with which he and others produced similar effects; nay effects, it was alleged, even greater and more wonderful than what was related of the patent *metallic tractors* of Perkins. The patent tractors of Perkins, therefore, were a piece of quackery. True;—and so also were the *wooden tractors* of Dr Haygarth. And physicians may raise the outcry of quackery as loudly and as often as they please—they will never succeed in getting rid of the obnoxious humbug, in one form or another, until they shall condescend to submit, like their brethren upon the continent, to a philosophical investigation of the principles and processes of Mesmer and his disciples. The effects of Perkinism, as well as those of Animal Magnetism, were ascribed by all *learned* physicians to the *imagination*. What a wonderful power this Imagination must be, to be the sole cause of so many extraordinary effects! Amongst its other virtues—not remarked, indeed, by the physicians—it seems to afford an admirable casemate to ignorance and indolence. But if the imagination really does possess such astonishing powers, why, in the name of common sense, do not the Doctors more frequently dose their patients with Imagination, instead of poisonous drugs? Is there greater quackery in curing diseases by means of the Imagination, than by Rhubarb, Magnesia, Opium, and Arsenic? But, according to St Real, *Qui dit Docteur, ne dit pas toujours un homme docte*. By-the-by, I can see no good reason why the effects produced by Rhubarb, Magnesia,

peated friction in certain directions, a magnetic attraction could be excited in iron, without the application of any magnet, and partly seduced, also, by the supposed fact, that, in the process above mentioned, the animal body exhibited a certain polarity and inclination, Mesmer now jumped at once to the conclusion, that there exists in the animal frame an original and peculiar species of magnetism, which is capable of being set in activity without the aid of the artificial magnet. He then extended this magnetic power over all nature, formed theories upon this assumed fact, and, in so far as this alleged influence was manifested in the animal body, he gave it the name of *animal*, to distinguish it from the *mineral* magnetism. \*

Opium, Arsenic, Foxglove, Mercury, &c. should not also be referred to the influence of the imagination. This would tend greatly to simplify the theory of Medicine. The universal *panacea* is at length discovered. The medical report of every case successfully treated might henceforth be drawn up in something like the following terms :

“ Visited A. B. whom I found confined to bed in a very weak state, and labouring under a severe attack of ———. Prescribed the following dose :

R . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . . ;

and, such was the effect of this treatment upon the *Imagination* of the patient, that he rapidly recovered, is now quite well, and able to go about his ordinary business.

\* It has been thought proper to point out, thus particularly, the original mistake of Mesmer, because it is quite

It is highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that the discovery of that organic susceptibility, which gave rise to the magnetic treatment, did not originate entirely with Mesmer himself, but was suggested to him by the perusal of the works of certain mystical writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to which reference has already been made. But Mesmer has the unquestionable merit of having been the first, in recent times, who availed himself of the hints thrown out by these earlier writers, and who, by patient and indefatigable investigation and experiment, succeeded in establishing, as demonstrated fact, that which, so far as we know, had previously been, at least in a great measure, theory and conjecture.

From the period of this curious discovery, however, in whatever manner it may have been suggested, its author daily assumed a more mysterious demeanour, veiled his experiments and observations in a sort of sacred obscurity, and talked no more of mineral, but of *animal magnetism*. He no

certain that a great deal of the argument, and almost the whole of the wit and ridicule, by which the magnetic treatment has, at any time, been assailed, have been suggested by the name; and many persons, otherwise ignorant of the subject, still seem to expect, like the first French Commissioners, to see the *magnetic fluid* sensibly exhibited. I formerly mentioned, that, for this and other reasons, many intelligent persons conceive the name of Animal Magnetism to be improper; but it would not be easy now to substitute one more appropriate.



longer made use of the magnetic rods, but considered his own body as the depository of this magnetic virtue, which he was not merely capable of communicating at pleasure, by immediate manipulation, but could convey to a distance, by the power of his volition, and thus eradicate the most complicated diseases, without explaining, in an intelligible and satisfactory manner—probably without perfectly comprehending—the nature of the method by which he performed his cures.

No person was able to penetrate this mysterious obscurity; but it was still commonly believed that Mesmer continued to operate by means of magnetic rods concealed about his person. Meanwhile, some learned individuals endeavoured to throw discredit on his treatment; and others, who had once been attached to him, afterwards publicly and explicitly proclaimed their scepticism. Mesmer, in short, was pretty generally held to be an impostor, or, at least, a self-deceiving enthusiast. In order to obviate these suspicions, he sent circular letters to the most celebrated learned societies in Europe, in which he attempted to explain his principles, and gave an account of his magnetic cures. Of these learned bodies, the Royal Academy of Berlin alone condescended to return an answer, in which some doubts were expressed, and some queries put to the author, to which, however,

he did not think proper to make any reply; and by this conduct he strengthened the unfavourable opinion which had been entertained against him. \*

The ill repute in which he now stood in the eyes of his professional brethren, and the scientific public in general, induced Mesmer to leave Vienna, in the year 1777, and to look out for some new theatre for the exercise of his magnetic art. Some time elapsed before the public received any certain intelligence respecting his movements; but at length, in the month of February 1778, he made his appearance at Paris, where, however, he at first found the learned but little disposed to patronize his discovery. He was afterwards, however, fortunate enough to make a convert of Dr D'Eslon, who became a zealous partizan of the magnetic doctrine and treatment, and encouraged Mesmer to publish, in the following year, a short treatise,† which, besides an apology for his conduct in Vienna, contained a concentrated view of his system, in twenty-seven propositions. The following is the substance of this system.

There exists a reciprocal influencé between the

\* See *Hist. de l'Acad. Royale des Sciences*, an 1775, p. 33, &c., and *Nouvelles Memoires de l'Academ. de Berlin*, an 1775.—*Hist.* p. 33.

† *Memoire sur la Decouverte du Magnetisme Animal*. Paris, 1779.

heavenly bodies, the earth, and animated beings. The medium of this influence is a very subtile fluid, pervading the whole universe, which, from its nature, is capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating every impulse of motion. This reciprocal action is subject to certain mechanical laws, which have not yet been discovered. From this action there result alternative effects, which may be considered as a sort of *flux* and *reflux*. This flux and reflux may be more or less general, more or less particular, more or less compounded, according to the nature of the causes which determine them. It is by this operation (the most universal of those which nature exhibits to us), that the relations of activity are maintained between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and its constituent parts. The properties of matter, and of organized bodies, depend upon this operation. The animal body experiences the alternative effects of this agent; which, by insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves, affects them immediately. The human body exhibits properties analogous to those of the magnet, such as *polarity* and *inclination*. The property of the animal body, which renders it susceptible of this influence, occasioned its denomination of Animal Magnetism. The action and the virtue of Animal Magnetism are capable of being communicated to other animated and in-

animate bodies. The one and the other, however, are susceptible of them in different degrees. This action and this virtue can be increased and propagated by these bodies. We observe from experience the flowing of a certain subtile matter, which penetrates all bodies, without perceptibly losing any of its activity; and it operates at a considerable distance, without the aid of any intermediate object. Like light, it is reflected by mirrors; and it is invigorated, diffused, and communicated by sound. This virtue is capable of being accumulated, concentrated, and transported. There are animated bodies, although very rare, which possess a property so opposite to Magnetism, that their mere presence prevents all its effects in other bodies. This opposite power also penetrates all bodies, and is also capable of being concentrated and diffused: It is, therefore, not merely a negative, but a really positive power. The mineral magnet, whether natural or artificial, is likewise equally susceptible with other bodies of Animal Magnetism, and even of the opposite virtue, without suffering, in either case, any alteration of its agency in respect to iron; which proves that the principle of Animal Magnetism is essentially different from that of the mineral. This system will furnish new illustrations of the nature of fire and of light; as also of the theory of attraction, of flux and reflux, of the mag-

net and of electricity. It will inform us, that the magnet and artificial electricity only have, with respect to diseases, properties in common with several other agents which nature presents to us ; and that, if the former have produced some salutary effects, these effects are to be ascribed to Animal Magnetism. By means of Animal Magnetism, nervous diseases may be cured immediately, and other complaints mediately : It explains to us the operation of the remedies, and promotes the salutary crises. With the knowledge of its principles, the physician can discover, with certainty, the origin, the nature, and the progress of diseases, even the most complicated ; he can arrest their progress, and ultimately cure them, without ever exposing the patient to dangerous or troublesome consequences. Lastly, this doctrine will enable the physician to judge accurately with respect to the degree of health possessed by all individuals, and to preserve them from those diseases to which they may be exposed. Thus, the science of Medicine may attain its highest degree of perfection.\*

\* Since the great light which has been thrown upon this subject by the more widely extended practice of Animal Magnetism among persons of learning and intelligence, these early mystical theories of Mesmer and his partisans, which appear to have been borrowed from the writers of a previous age, have become rather curious than really interesting or instructive. In a work like the present, however, some notice of them could not,

This novel, extraordinary, and obscure theory found no favourable reception among men of science in France; on the contrary, it was, perhaps not undeservedly, treated, as the dream of a visionary, with coldness or contempt.

The Medical Faculty of Paris, however, could not be expected to continue altogether indifferent to the subject, especially as one of its members, Dr D'Eslon, was not only a zealous partizan of Mesmer, but had actually published a work upon Animal Magnetism. But the measures at length resorted to, for the purpose of vindicating the honour and privileges of the body, were not, assuredly, very creditable to the state of science and liberality towards the conclusion of "the philosophical century." Instead of candidly investigating the whole matter, with a view to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the obnoxious doctrine, they proceeded, at once, to deprive the magnetic Doctor of his voice in the Faculty for a whole year, and threatened farther, that, if he did not recant his principles at the expiration of that period, his name should be finally erased from the list of members; in short, that he should be excommunicated. An

with propriety, have been omitted. But let no one imagine that he has demolished Animal Magnetism, as a fact, when he has merely demonstrated the improbability of these hypotheses to explain its cause.

incipient schism in the church, some centuries ago, could not have been contemplated at Rome with greater horror and alarm, than were exhibited by these disciples of *Æsculapius* on the disclosure of the magnetic heresy.\*

But although deprived of scientific and profes-

\* Learned bodies seldom obtain much credit from posterity for their attempts to interfere with the progress of scientific discovery. In the year 169, the celebrated Galen came to Rome, where he became eminent for his successful practice; but the ignorance of the *learned* of those times drove him thence by an accusation of practising the magical arts. The system of Copernicus was, for a considerable period, embraced by astronomers only: The learned in all other sciences viewed it with scorn and contempt. In the 17th century, Galileo was persecuted by the Roman Consistory, for maintaining the true theory of the planetary motions. The medical faculty have always been peculiarly unfortunate in their ludicrous crusades against heretical remedies. Whenever they have ventured to enter the lists, they have almost invariably been beaten off the field. In the year 1566, the Faculty of Medicine at Paris issued a mandate prohibiting the use of antimony, and this mandate was confirmed by the Parliament. Paumier of Caen, a great chemist and celebrated physician at Paris, having disregarded this mandate of the Faculty, thus sanctioned by the Parliament, was degraded in 1609. The *Quinquina*, or Peruvian bark, was imported into Europe by the Spaniards in 1640. Nine or ten years afterwards, the Jesuits distributed a great quantity of it at Rome, curing intermittent fevers with it, as if by enchantment. The physicians, however, declared war against this efficacious remedy, and the ecclesiastics prohibited sick persons from using it, alleging that it possessed no virtue but what it derived from a compact made by the Indians with the devil. In 1784, the Medical Faculty of Paris prohibited the practice of Animal Magnetism by any of its members, under the penalty of being deprived of the privileges of their profession.

sional patronage, the practice of Animal Magnetism began to make considerable progress among the public; and this progress was greatly accelerated in consequence of the successful magnetic treatment of some patients from among the more respectable classes of society, who published accounts of their cures, and being astonished at the result of the means employed, took occasion to bestow the most extravagant panegyrics upon Mesmer and his remedial art. Among these was the celebrated Court de Gebelin, the learned author of the *Monde Primitif*, who, from a very dangerous state, had been restored to health by Magnetism; and who, in a letter to his subscribers, not only related the particulars of his own case, as a proof of the superior efficacy of Mesmer's treatment, but extolled the magnetic *panacea* as the most wonderful and the most beneficial discovery that had been made by human wisdom and ingenuity since the creation of the world.\*

\* It is a very great mistake to suppose that all learned and intelligent men were opposed to the doctrines of Mesmer: on the contrary, he had a considerable number of adherents among the most respectable and best educated classes of society. M. de Segur, the elder, formerly Ambassador from France at the Court of St Peterburgh, in his amusing publication, entitled, *Memoires, Souvenirs et Aneodotes* (vol. ii.), informs us, that he himself was one of the most zealous disciples of Mesmer, as were also MM. de Gebelin, Olavides, d'Espremenil, de Jaucourt, de Chastellux, de Choiseul-Gouffier, de Lafayette, and many



The very mystery in which Mesmer enveloped his treatment, tended to excite curiosity, while it withdrew the attention from the active principle, and thus caused him to be regarded individually as an extraordinary personage, full of the old Egyptian wisdom, and conversant with all the secret influences of nature. This, while it extended his reputation, seemed to flatter the vanity and mystical disposition of the man. His house became crowd-

others, all enlightened and talented men. M. de Segur never abandoned his conviction of the reality of the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, and he very judiciously appeals to his own experience in justification of this conviction. "I have no desire," says he, "to enter into any controversy on the subject; it is sufficient for me to affirm that, having been present at a great number of experiments, I have witnessed impressions and effects very real, very extraordinary, but of which I have never had the cause explained." On the supposition that these impressions and effects may be the results of an exalted *imagination*, M. de Segur very pertinently asks, whether this word *imagination* can be considered as a sufficiently satisfactory refutation, and whether the learned and philosophical are not bound, at least, by the love of truth, to investigate the causes of this new and strange power of the imagination. Assuredly, says he, when such men as I have mentioned, and hundreds of other learned and intelligent individuals, in all parts of Europe, have expressed their conviction of the reality of certain facts, founded upon personal experience, it must require something more than a mere theoretical refutation to invalidate the evidence in favour of a particular doctrine. It is not sufficient to ascribe the effects in question to the influence of the imagination; the advocates of that theory are imperatively called upon to explain what they mean by imagination, and how the peculiar effects can be rationally attributed to the influence of that faculty.

ed with patients of all ranks, and from every quarter ; and such was the extent and success of his practice, that, in the course of a short time, he is said to have amassed a large fortune.

## CHAPTER XI.

ALTHOUGH Mesmer had the unquestionable merit of being the first who experimentally discovered and demonstrated the effects of the magnetic process upon the animal constitution, and who employed that process systematically for the cure of diseases, it cannot be denied that he greatly retarded the general acknowledgment of the reality and the value of his discovery, by the absurd affectation of much idle, unnecessary, and almost ludicrous solemnity, in his mode of conducting the treatment. We have now no means of ascertaining whether all this was done merely for the purpose of *mystification*, or whether he himself actually believed it to be essential to the success of his practice. There can be no doubt, however, that this affectation of mystery was highly unfavourable to the scientific investigation of the subject, besides injuring his own character in the eyes of many learned and sensible persons, who, looking only at the accessories, and having no knowledge of the essential agent, were disposed to regard him mere-

ly as an imposing quack ; whereas, we have every reason to believe that he was himself sincerely impressed with a conviction of the reality, and the great scientific importance, of the discovery he had made, however much he might attempt to disguise, disfigure, and obscure it by ridiculous ceremony and ostentation.

He operated not only by the actual touch of his hands, or by means of an iron rod extended to some distance from his body ; but, by means of cords, he placed his patients in connexion with magnetized trees, or conducted the invisible magnetic fluid out of covered vessels (*baquets*) to the patients, who sat round in a circle ; and, by this treatment, he was enabled to throw them into very peculiar states, which could not be properly called either sleeping or waking, but presented some of the phenomena of both. It sometimes happened, however, that none of all these arrangements was found necessary ; for a single look from Mesmer was frequently sufficient to produce the same effects. This last circumstance will be better understood when we come to consider the improvements which were made upon the processes of Animal Magnetism subsequently to the retirement of its discoverer.

In order, it is supposed, to increase the efficacy of the treatment, the apartment in which he per-

formed his operations and cures was darkened to a sort of twilight ; a number of mirrors were placed around it ; and a profound and mysterious silence prevailed, which was only interrupted occasionally by the tones of the *harmonica*, an instrument upon which Mesmer himself performed with great skill, or by those of a harpsichord.

All this whimsical apparatus and mystery, however essential it may have appeared to Mesmer himself, had too much the semblance of quackery, and was certainly calculated to operate unfavourably to the reputation of his treatment in the minds of sober and scientific men ; who, upon a superficial view, and judging merely from what was actually submitted to their senses, must have been inclined to attribute any effects which they witnessed to the influence of the surrounding scene upon the imagination and the nervous system, rather than to that secret magnetic virtue to which the operator ascribed them, but which could not be palpably exhibited. It is said that Mesmer, in his latter days, approved and adopted the more simple and less ostentatious, yet equally efficacious, processes, which were subsequently introduced by his successors in the magnetic art. The Mesmerian system, however, along with the use of the *baquet*, was for a long time retained, and, if not now, was,

at least till lately, practised by some of his disciples.

Mesmer was not only deprived of the countenance of the medical profession and the protection of government; he was ridiculed by the wits of Paris, and attacked and calumniated by the public journals, into which, we are told, the censors allowed no article to be admitted which emanated from any of his partizans. Indignant at such illiberal conduct, he at length found it necessary to vindicate himself, and to expose to the world the unfair proceedings of his enemies.\*

It cannot be denied, however, that Mesmer drew down upon himself a great deal of this obloquy and persecution by the obscurity of some of his propositions, the mystery attending his practice, and by the coldness and contempt with which he affected to treat the professors, as well as the profession, of the medical art. He boldly set out with the extraordinary and novel principle: *There is but one health, one disease, and one remedy*; and he arrogated to himself the discovery of the grand *panacea*.

\* See *Precis Historique des Faits relatifs au Magnetisme Animal*, &c. 1781; a work which deserves to be carefully perused by all those who are desirous of obtaining a full knowledge of the early history of the magnetic doctrines and practice, and of the violent struggle they had to maintain with prejudice and persecution.

To add to the disagreeableness of his situation, a misunderstanding arose, about this time, between him and his intimate friend and zealous partizan, D'Eslon, who had set up a separate and independent magnetic establishment—a step which occasioned a serious breach between the disciple and his master. The consequence of all these unpleasant circumstances was, that Mesmer quitted Paris, and went to reside for a time at Spaa; until at length he was induced, by the solicitation of his friends, to return to the French metropolis, for the purpose of delivering a course of lectures on his magnetic remedy.

Mesmer now had recourse to a proceeding which has exposed him to a good deal of animadversion. He had previously refused a very handsome pecuniary remuneration offered him by the French government for the communication of his secret, upon the pretext that the knowledge of it might give occasion to dangerous abuses; whereas, upon his return to Paris at this time, he agreed to sell this secret, which he declined to entrust to the prudence and discretion of the magistracy, to every private individual who was willing to pay one hundred Louis-d'or in return. With this view, he established a secret society, under the name of "The *Harmony*," where he initiated those who paid him the above price into his mystery, under the most sacred

promises of secrecy ; and by this means he is said to have realized a fortune of 150,000 crowns.\* This society consisted principally of wealthy persons who had not been educated for the medical profession ; it reckoned only four physicians among its number.

In consequence of this proceeding, Animal Magnetism lost a great deal of that impenetrable mys-

\* M. Deleuze vindicates Mesmer, upon not unreasonable grounds, from the censures to which he exposed himself by this proceeding. It must be recollected, that he had purchased the right of exercising the medical profession, and he was, therefore, entitled to make others pay for the instruction he communicated to them. But farther, he had spent a great deal of time and labour upon a discovery, which he himself believed to be of vast importance to science and to humanity ; and he was rewarded for his exertions by the persecution of the whole Faculty. He had, therefore, a right to sell the secret of his method to those who were willing to purchase it. But it is known to be a fact, that he instructed several individuals gratuitously ; and there is an anecdote respecting him, related by Deleuze, which proves his liberality, and does great credit to the delicacy and disinterestedness of his character. M. Nicolas, a physician of Grenoble, was one of those who came to be enrolled among his pupils. Having paid down the sum required, he confessed that the sacrifice embarrassed him a good deal. " I thank you, Sir," said Mesmer, " for your zeal and confidence ; but, my dear brother, don't let this distress you. Here are an hundred Louis ; carry them to the box, that it may be believed you have paid as well as the rest ; and let this remain a secret between ourselves." This anecdote was communicated to Deleuze by M. Nicolas himself. Moreover, it is very doubtful whether Mesmer ever realised such large sums, as he is alleged by some to have acquired.



tery in which it had been hitherto enveloped, and which had, at least, secured it from any flagrant abuse. The secret was not kept: The art was empirically practised by persons who had obtained merely a superficial knowledge of its principles; and it was frequently exposed to the most ludicrous misapplications; circumstances which could not fail to bring the whole treatment into general discredit.

In the mean time, however, some of Mesmer's pupils made a more prudent and cautious use of Animal Magnetism. They established *Harmonic Societies* in the different provinces and towns of France, and united themselves under the general superintendence of Mesmer. In these institutions, the destitute sick were magnetised *gratis*, in the presence of physicians; the discoveries made in the progress of their practice were communicated to each other; and the most interesting cases were made public through the medium of the press.\*

\* These early publications on the phenomena of Animal Magnetism, are very numerous, and some of them exceedingly interesting. The following deserve especial notice:—

Detail des Cures opereés à Lyon par le Magn. Anim. selon les Principes de M. Mesmer, par M. Orelut; précédé d'une Lettre à M. Mesmer. Lyon, 1784.—Rapport des Cures opereés à Bayonne par le Magn. Anim. par M. le Comte Max. de Puysegur; avec des Notes de M. Duval d'Espremeni. Bayonne et Paris, 1784.—Detail des Cures Opereés à Burzancy par le Magnet. Anim. Soissons, 1784.—Nouvelles Cures opereés par

It is rather singular that the Medical Society of Paris paid so little attention to this alleged discovery, considering the great sensation it had excited among the public; and that they permitted Animal Magnetism to be practised for so long a period, without any investigation, interruption, or hindrance upon their part.

In the year 1778, indeed, at the solicitation of a friend of Mesmer's, they appointed a committee to

le Magnet. Anim. Paris, 1784.—Recueil d'Observations et de Faits relatifs au Magnet. Anim. Publié par la Societé de Guienne à Bordeaux. 1785.—Appergu de la Maniere d'administrer les Remedes indiqués par le Magnet. Anim. à l'Usage des Magnetiseurs qui ne sont Medicina. 1784.—Exposé des differentes Cures opereés depuis le 15 d'Aout 1780; Jusqu' au 12 de Juin 1786, par les Membres de la Societé Harmon. de Strasburg. 1786.—Suite des Cures faites par differens Magnetiseurs de la Societé Harmon. de Strasb. 1787.—Annales de la Soc. Harm. de Strasb., ou Cures que le Membres de cette Societé ont opereés par le Magnet. Anim. Strasb. 1789.—Extrait des Journaux d'un Magnetiseur (Comte de Lutzelbourg), attaché à la Soc. Harm. de Strasb. 1786.—Journal du Traitement Magnetique de la Dem. N. &c. par M. Tardy de Montravel. Lond. 1786.—Suite du Traitement, &c. By the same.—Journal du Traitement Magnet. de Madame Braun. By the same. Strasb. 1787.—Lettre à Mad. la Comtesse de L. contenant une Observation Magnetique, faite par une Somnambule sur un Enfant de Six Mois. 1787.—Nouveaux Extraits des Journaux d'un Magnetiseur, &c. Strasb. 1788.—Faits et Notions Magnetiques. Strasb. 1788.—Journal Magnetique du Traitement de Mademoisselle D. et de Madame N. par M. C. de Lyon. 1789. A great deal of curious information upon this subject will be found also in the periodical and other publications of those times, but much of it must be received with caution, as many false and prejudiced views of it were entertained.

enquire into this subject, consisting of the physicians, Daubenton, Desperrieres, Mauduyt, Andry, Tessier, and Vicq-d'Azyr; but Mesmer himself, although he had no objection to receive these gentlemen, or any other individuals, as witnesses of his treatment, would not agree to the proposed investigation, on the ground that it might give him too much the appearance of a common mystical empiric. On the other hand, he proposed to the Medical Faculty, as a test of the superior efficacy of his practice, that twenty-four patients should be selected from the hospitals, one-half of whom were to be treated according to the usual principles of medicine, and the other half should be magnetised by himself.\* This proposal, however, was not accepted by the Faculty, who contented themselves with commissioning two of their number, MM. Andry and Thouret, to investigate the medicinal effects of the mineral magnet, a task which these gentlemen performed in a very satisfactory manner.†

\* The same proposal, it is said, has been repeatedly made by the Marquis de Puysegur, but it has never been accepted. The circumstance is remarkable, as it demonstrates, at least, the great confidence which the magnetisers repose in the efficacy of their peculiar mode of treatment.

† See *Observations et Recherches sur l'usage de l'aimant en Médecine, ou Mémoires sur le Magnétisme Médicinal*; in the *Histoire de la Société Royale de Médecine* for the year 1779. Paris, 1782.

At length, when Animal Magnetism prevailed to such an extent in France, as to give occasion to many abuses of that practice in the hands of the ignorant and unskilful, a royal mandate was issued, upon the 12th of March 1784, to the Medical Faculty, requiring them to appoint commissioners to investigate the matter. Two commissions were in consequence appointed: the one consisting of mem-

The medicinal efficacy of the mineral magnet seems to have been observed in ancient times, and its application, in certain diseases, was recommended by Galen and Dioscorides. Borelli takes notice of its application in the toothache and ear-ache: "Quidam sunt, qui dentiscalpia, auriscalpiaque habent, quæ tactu solo dolores dentium, aurium et oculorum tollant." Klarich of Gottingen, occupied himself, about the year 1765, with experiments on the medicinal efficacy of Magnetism. (See the *Hannoverian Magazine* for 1765, and the *Göttingen Literary Advertiser* for 1765, 1766. The reader will also find this subject amply discussed in the following works:—

Ludwig, Dissert. de Magnetismo in Corpore Humano. Leip. 1772.

J. C. Unzer, Beschreibung der mit dem Künstlichen Magnet angestellten Versuche. Altona, 1775.

J. F. Bolten, Nachricht von einem mit dem Künstlichen Magnet gemachten Versuch in einer Nervenkrankheit. Hamb. 1775.

J. A. Heinsius, Beyträge zutmeinen Versuchen welche mit künstlichen Magneten in verschiedenen krankheiten angestellt worden. Leip. 1776.

Sammlung der neuesten gedruckten und geschriebenen Nachrichten von Magnetcuren. Leip. 1778.

Historia Trismitonici Quadraginta fere Septimanarum a Philatro de Woher curati. Freiburg, 1778.

bers of the Academy of Sciences—Franklin, Le Roi, Bailly, De Bori, and Lavoisier—and of the Medical Faculty—Bovie, and after his death, Majault, Sallin, D’Arcet, and Guillotin; the other composed of members of the Society of Physicians—Poissonier, Desperrieres, Caille, Mauduyt, Andry, and Jussieu.

The result of the investigation by these commissioners is well known. They published reports, abounding with inconsistencies certainly, but drawn up with great art, and, upon the whole, altogether unfavourable to the pretensions of Animal Magnetism; and these reports seem to have satisfied most of the scientific men of that period, and have been appealed to ever since—more especially in this country, where great ignorance of the subject has always prevailed—as having set the question, respecting the merits of the magnetic treatment, completely at rest.\*

\* See *Rapport des Commissaires de la Société Royale de Médecine, nommés par le Roi, pour faire l’examen du Magnétisme Animal.* Paris, 1784.—*Rapport des Commissaires chargés par le Roi de l’examen du Magnétisme Animal* (by M. Bailly.) Paris, 1784.—*Exposé des expériences qui ont été faites sur le Magnétisme Animal: Lu à l’Académie des Sciences, par M. Bailly.* Paris, 1784.—*Report of Benjamin Franklin, and other Commissioners charged by the King of France with the examination of the Animal Magnetism, as now practised at Paris:* translated from the French, with an historical introduction. Lond. 1785.

The following extract from the Report of the Commissioners

The whole of this investigation, however, is alleged by the professors of **Animal Magnetism**, and upon good grounds, to have been conducted in a

will sufficiently shew the object they appear to have had in view, and the method in which the investigation was conducted :

1. Le fluide, que les Commissaires nomment *Fluide magnetique animal*, n'existe pas, car il échappe à tous le sens.

2. Ce fluide échappant à tous les sens, son existence ne peut être démontré que par les effets curatifs dans le traitement des maladies, ou par les effets momentanés sur l'économie animale. *Il faut exclure de ces deux preuves le traitement des maladies, parce qu'il ne peut fournir que des résultats toujours incertains et souvent trompeurs.*

3. Les véritables preuves, les preuves purement physiques de l'existence de ce fluide, sont *les effets momentanés sur le corps animal.*

Pour s'assurer de ces effets, les Commissaires ont fait des épreuves : 1. Sur eux-mêmes ; 2. Sur sept malades ; 3. Sur quatre personnes ; 4. Sur une société assemblée chez M. Franklin ; 5. Sur des malades assemblés chez M. Jumelin ; 6. Avec un arbre magnétisé ; 7. Enfin sur différens sujets.

4. De ces expériences, les Commissaires ont conclu, que l'imagination fait tout, que le **Magnetisme** est nul. Imagination, imitation, attouchement, telles sont les vrais causes des effets attribué au **Magnetisme Animal**.

5. Les procédés du **magnetisme** étant dangereux, il suit que tout traitement public, où les moyens du **magnetisme** seront employés, ne peut avoir à la longue que des effets funestes.

Such is the substance of this celebrated report. It seems quite clear, that these Commissioners were exceedingly ignorant of the subject they were charged to investigate, and that their report was addressed to a public even more ignorant than themselves. It would appear, however, that their principal object was to satisfy themselves of the existence or non-existence of the alleged *magnetic fluid*, which fluid was never any thing more than a mere hypothesis in the magnetic theories—a gratuitous assumption of Mesmer's, in order to enable him to account for the phenomena ; and the reality of these phenomena

very partial, superficial, and unsatisfactory manner. Franklin is said to have been indisposed at the time, and to have paid little attention to the

being once established, they could be in no degree affected by the rejection of the supposed agent. The facts connected with the magnetic treatment would still have stood upon the same footing as they did previous to the investigation.

But, in other respects, the method pursued by the Commissioners in their inquiries was sufficiently absurd. Every system of doctrine can be legitimately refuted only upon its own principles, viz. by disproving its facts, and invalidating the principles deduced from them. Now, how did the Commissioners proceed? It was asserted by the magnetisers, upon alleged experience, that the magnetic treatment was of great efficacy in the cure of diseases; but, so far as I am aware, they never pretended to say that the effects could be always produced instantaneously. But the Commissioners, with singular inconsistency, rejected altogether the proofs resulting from the treatment of diseases, for a reason which, if good at all, is equally applicable to every species of remedial treatment, and would establish the utter uncertainty of all medical science, viz. that "it could only furnish results always uncertain, and frequently fallacious;" and they restricted their investigation to an examination of the effects instantaneously produced, which formed no part of the magnetic doctrine.

The Commissioners, however, do not pretend to deny that some effects were produced in the course of their experiments, which, indeed, is wonderful enough, considering the circumstances in which they were made. But these effects they ascribed to imagination, imitation, and *attouchement*—that is to say, they attempted to refute one theory by setting up another of their own; and, whether they were right or wrong, is comparatively a matter of little consequence. It is the facts, and not the opinions of theorists, which are of chief importance here, as in all other scientific questions. The reader, however, will find some observations in the sequel, which will probably convince him, that, in our present more advanced state of knowledge upon this subject, the theory of imagination, imitation,

proceedings. Of the whole commissioners, the learned and intelligent Jussieu, it is stated, took the greatest interest in the investigation, and bestowed the greatest attention upon the phenomena exhibited; and it is a circumstance rather remarkable, that this eminent physician not only refused to subscribe the general report drawn up by the other commissioners, but published a special report of his own, in which he presented an entirely different view of the matter, and conveyed a much more favourable impression with regard to the pretensions of Mesmer and his disciples.\*

and *attouchement*, is utterly untenable, if not manifestly absurd; and, in fact, it has been long since abandoned by all the intelligent opponents of Magnetism.

The dangers attending the empirical and unskilful administration of Animal Magnetism are allowed upon all hands—by the partizans as well as by the opponents of the system; but this observation cannot apply to the treatment, when carefully conducted under scientific and medical superintendence and control; and, at any rate, it has nothing to do with the truth of the facts, unless, indeed, it be to confirm them.

It must always be remembered, that the investigation by these Commissioners took place at a period when Animal Magnetism was yet in its infancy. The processes, as well as the effects, were totally different then from what they are now. An experienced magnetiser of the present day cannot but laugh when he finds Magnetism described in the Report of these Commissioners, as “the art of disposing sensible subjects to convulsive motions!”

\* *Rapport de l'un des Commissaires (A. L. Jussieu) chargés par le Roi de l'examen du Magnetisme Animal.* Paris, 1784.

I have been somewhere accused of misrepresenting the ten-



It is well known that these commissioners, in general, although men of undoubted learning and talents, proceeded to the investigation of Animal

dency of the report made by Jussieu. I have not at present that document at hand; but having perused it some years ago, I am satisfied of the general correctness of the account I have given of it, although the author expresses his sentiments with considerable reserve. On turning to Kluge and Deleuze, I find that both of these authors speak of it in the same terms. Deleuze says, *Les faits qu'il avoit examinés avec ses collègues lui avoient paru offrir des preuves certaines de l'action du magnetisme.* In the recent Report of the Committee of the Royal Academy of Medicine, Jussieu is alluded to as that "one conscientious and enlightened man who had published a report in contradiction to that of his colleagues." The integrity and manly courage displayed by Jussieu upon this occasion, will appear still more conspicuous, when it is known that great interest was employed, even by the government, to procure his signature to the general Report, and to prevent him from publishing his dissent.

Since the preceding part of this Note was written, I have had an opportunity of again seeing a copy of the Report of M. Jussieu, and I find that it completely bears out my original representation. I appeal to the Report itself, in which the learned author unequivocally admits the influence of the magnetic action on the human body. Referring to his own experiments, M. Jussieu says: "*Ces faits sont peu nombreux et peu variés, parce que je n'ai pu oter que ceux qui étaient bien vérifiés, et sur lesquels je n'avais aucun doute.* ILS SUFFIRENT POUR FAIRE ADMETTRE LA POSSIBILITÉ OU EXISTENCE D'UN FLUIDE, OU AGENT, QUI SE PORTE DE L'HOMME À SON SEMBLABLE, ET EXERCE QUELQUEFOIS SUR CE DERNIER UNE ACTION SENSIBLE." And in enumerating those influences by which the human body may be affected, the author includes L'ACTION D'UN FLUIDE ÉMANÉ D'UN CORPS SEMBLABLE. If these expressions do not imply a belief of the magnetic action, as asserted by Mesmer and his disciples, I confess that I am utterly unable to comprehend their meaning.

Magnetism with minds strongly prepossessed against the subject of inquiry. It is certain, too, that they did not possess a sufficiently intimate knowledge of that subject, to enable them to conduct their researches with the requisite skill and judgment. They did not, however, pretend to deny altogether the effects produced by the magnetic treatment, imperfectly as it would appear to have been applied; and this is a circumstance of considerable importance. But, as the fluid which Mesmer and his friends alleged to be active in the process could not be physically exhibited, they conceived themselves justified in denying its existence—probably upon the principle, that *de non apparentibus, et non existentibus, eadem est ratio*—and in ascribing the phenomena which they did observe to sensitive excitement, imagination, and imitation. The commissioners, then, admitted that certain effects were produced by the magnetic processes which they attempted; and they even put forth a theory to account for the phenomena. But this theory must just take its place at the side of all the others which have been formed upon the same subject; and it must be ultimately received or rejected, according as it shall be found to be confirmed or refuted by experience. \*

\* The following circumstances will shew the spirit in which the French Academicians, and other wise men of that period, contemplated the subject of Animal Magnetism.

At the period, indeed, when these commissioners instituted their investigation, the principles of Animal Magnetism were but imperfectly known. They appear to have been almost entirely ignorant of the conditions of the treatment. They were not informed of the great influence of volition in determining and regulating the efficacy of the magnetic process, and that the external means employed, although frequently useful, are not absolutely essential, but merely instrumental and accessory, and may sometimes be altogether dispensed with. They do not seem to have been aware that we cannot always be assured of the magnetic influence by effects instantaneously produced. In short, they ought previously to have studied the subject more profoundly; to have multiplied their experiments, and taken full time to consider the nature of the

Soon after the Commissioners had made their report, M. Thouret published his book, entitled, *Recherches et doutes sur le Magnetisme Animal*, in which he proposed to investigate the subject, not with a view to ascertain the reality of the alleged facts, or the truth of the doctrine, but to point out—its *political and moral relations!* In the approbation given to the work of M. Thouret by the Royal Society of Medicine, they state that they had perceived with considerable anxiety the *vogue* which Animal Magnetism had acquired; that they were much displeased that its processes, good or bad, had been administered to patients, without having been previously submitted to them for their approval, conform to the orders of government; and that they considered it one of their duties to protest against such an abuse. From such prejudiced judges what could have been expected?

phenomena, instead of pronouncing an inconsiderate and hasty decision upon a very superficial and imperfect examination.

The experiments, too, were conducted, not under the superintendence of Mesmer himself, but of his pupil D'Eslon, who afterwards protested against the Reports of the Commissioners,\* as did also several other professors of Animal Magnetism; among whom M. Bonnefoy distinguished himself by an ingenious analysis of these Reports, in which he shewed that the Commissioners had been guilty of a number of errors and contradictions.†

A variety of other publications appeared, about this period, for and against the practice of Animal Magnetism;\* and at length Macquart and Briuede endeavoured to give a final blow to magnetic science, in the article *Imagination*, in the *Encyclopedie Methodique de Medecine*.

The facts, however, which the new system of treatment almost daily disclosed, were much too numerous, too unambiguous, and too firmly established, to be overthrown even by the united force

\* *Observations sur les deux Rapports de M.M. les Commissaires nommés par sa Majesté pour l'examen du Magnetisme Animal*, par M. d'Eslon. 1784.

† *Analyse Raisonnée des Rapports*, &c. par J. B. Bonnefoy. 1784.

‡ A list of the most important of these publications will be given in the Appendix.

of learning, prejudice, ingenuity, ridicule, invective, and persecution. Accordingly, the subject of Animal Magnetism continued to occasion much controversy in France, until, upon the breaking out of the revolution, other interests than those of science almost entirely absorbed the public attention. It was still practised, however, as a remedial art, in some of the provinces of that kingdom, where schools were formed, and societies established, for its cultivation and improvement.

In the year 1787, Lavater,\* the celebrated physiognomist, imparted the system of Animal Magnetism, as improved by Puysegur,† to the physi-

\* It would appear that Lavater had been originally a disbeliever in regard to the magnetic doctrines, until he had an opportunity of satisfying himself by experiments. The mystical views, then combined with the practice of the system, were well calculated to make a profound impression upon a mind so enthusiastic as his. Some curious letters, upon this subject, addressed by him to his friend Spalding, have been preserved in the 8th volume of Eschenmayer's *Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus*.

† Next to Mesmer, the original discoverer, Animal Magnetism, perhaps, lies under the greatest obligations to the Marquis de Puysegur, especially for the very interesting observations which he made and published upon the phenomena of the natural and of the magnetic somnambulism. His principal works upon this subject are, *Memoires pour servir à l'Histoire et à l'Établissement du Magnetisme Animal*, 3d edit. Paris, 1820.—*Du Magnetisme Animal, considéré dans ses Rapports avec diverses branches de la Physique general*. 2d edit. Paris, 1809.—*Recherches, experiences, et observations Physiologiques*

cians, Bickers, Olbers, and Wienholt,\* in Bremen ; and, about the same time, Boeckmann and Gmelin received it directly from Strasburg. It was owing principally to the zeal, ability, and industry of those learned and most respectable physicians, that the magnetic treatment was revived in Germany, where it has continued to flourish ever since in the hands of many intelligent adherents, and under the direct countenance and protection of some of the local governments. Besides a great variety of learned works upon this subject, which have appeared without intermission,† there are several Journals, both

sur l' homme dans l'état de Somnambulisme naturel, et dans le Somnambulisme provoqué par l'acte Magnétique. Paris, 1811.

\* Wienholt, for a considerable period, would not listen to any argument in favour of the magnetic treatment. At length, however, he was induced to make some experiments upon his patients, the success of which made him a complete and a sincere convert. He is the author of some valuable works upon the subject. The most useful is that entitled, *Heilkraft des Thierischen Magnetismus nach eigenen Beobachtungen*. Lemgo, 1802 ; 4 vols. 8vo.

Wienholt is, undoubtedly, one of the most sober and sensible writers on Animal Magnetism. His experiments were made with great caution, and all his observations breathe the spirit of perfect honesty, candour, and conscientiousness. His preface to the work above mentioned is of considerable importance to the early history of the progress of the magnetic treatment.

† The best elementary publications on Animal Magnetism are probably, *Khüge*, in German, and *Deleuse* in French, from both of whom I have not hesitated to borrow liberally. The

in France and in Germany, entirely and exclusively devoted to the phenomena and the theory of Animal Magnetism; in which the cases falling under that system of treatment are regularly recorded, in the same manner as other important facts which are observed in medical practice.\*

Meanwhile, Mesmer seems to have withdrawn in disgust from that theatre, upon which he had hitherto acted so conspicuous a part. He retired to his native country, Switzerland, where he is said to have continued the practice of the magnetic treatment privately, for the benefit of the poor, until the period of his death, which took place upon the 5th of March 1815, at Meersburg on the Lake of Constance, at the advanced age of eighty-one years. As a proof of his sincere belief in the efficacy of the remedy which he himself had dis-

latest, and most comprehensive, systematic work in German on the subject, so far as I am aware, is Professor Kieser's *System des Tellurismus, oder Thierischen Magnetismus*. Leips. 1822. 2 vols. large 8vo.

\* Among the most distinguished of these Journals may be reckoned the *Bibliothèque du Magnetisme Animal*, published at Paris since the year 1817, instead of the *Annales du Magnetisme Animal*, which it replaced; the *Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus*, edited by the Professors Eschenmayer, Kieser, Nasse, and Nees von Esenbeck, and published at Leipsic; and the *Jahrbücher für den Lebens-Magnetismus*, edited by Professor Wolfart of Berlin, and published also at Leipsic. I have not recently ascertained whether all or any of these are still in progress. They constitute a vast repertory of facts.

covered, it may be remarked, that he not only continued the practice of Animal Magnetism among the poor in his neighbourhood, during his retirement, but that he submitted to the magnetic treatment in his last illness, and experienced from it great relief.

During the active period of his career, Mesmer was exposed to a great deal of odium, and his character was frequently assailed by the most opprobrious aspersions. But the important and now generally recognised facts which he elicited by his practice, prove that he was no impostor. He appears to have been constitutionally disposed to mysticism; he paraded his discovery in all the trappings of quackery; and his natural vanity constantly led him not only to magnify his own merit, but to treat his opponents—nay, even his professional brethren in general—with a presumptuous contempt, which they could not fail to resent. Yet he seems to have been perfectly sincere in the doctrines which he professed, and honest in the detail of that experience upon which his theory was founded. In testimony of his liberality, it is worthy of notice, that, although during the course of his busy life he had ample opportunities of acquiring great wealth, and was reported by his adversaries to be of an avaricious disposition, his whole fortune, at the time of his death, was found not to ex-



ceed 10,000 francs. His loss was much lamented, especially by the poor in his neighbourhood, who had regarded him, for a long period, as their father and their physician.\*

However probable it may be that Mesmer had perused the writings of those more ancient authors to whom I have referred in this work, and that from them he derived the idea of his theory of nature, there still remains to him, in the language of one of his most faithful and intelligent disciples, the unquestionable and enduring merit of one of the greatest and most beneficial discoveries; and it argues a mean and ungrateful spirit to attempt to diminish the honour to which he is so deservedly entitled. "He raised one corner of the curtain behind which Nature conceals her secrets. Envy perceives, acknowledges, and admires the wonders

\* In an historical sketch of Animal Magnetism by M. de Lausanne, published in the *Annales du Magnetisme Animal*, it is said that Mesmer refused the offer of a yearly pension of 30,000 *livres*, made to him by the king of France through the minister Maurepas, because his own pecuniary interest was a secondary object with him, and he wished first to have his discovery formally recognised and sanctioned by authority. His answer was:—*Les offres qui me sont faites me semblent pecher, en ce qu'elles presentent mon interet pecuniaire, et non l'importance de ma decouverte, comme objet principal. La question doit etre absolument envisageé en sens contraire; car sans ma decouverte, ma personne n'est rien.* This is not the language of avarice. It is also said to have been in consequence of D'Eslon's breach of confidence that Mesmer was induced to sell his secret.

of somnambulism, which scepticism had previously denied and rejected as phantasms and chimeras. Incredulity can now no longer wrench the victory from truth, but it tears the palm of merit in pieces, because it has not fallen to its own share. In its meanness it cannot elevate itself to the greatness of the man; therefore it endeavours to draw him down beneath its own level, in order still to be above him. Mesmer expresses himself, upon this subject, with great truth and dignity: 'As long,' says he, 'as any discoveries were viewed as chimeras, the incredulity of certain learned men left me in undisturbed possession of them; but since they have been compelled to acknowledge their reality, they have laboured to place in opposition to me the works of antiquity, in which the words, *universal fluid, Magnetism, influences, &c.* are to be found. The question, however, is not about words, but about things, and the uses to which we apply them.' Who before Mesmer knew any thing of the peculiar method of operating upon others, which he discovered, and of the art of producing such remarkable phenomena as are manifested in somnambulism, which he taught us? Was not every thing that writing or tradition related of this subject as true, considered as fabulous or absurd? Do we not owe all that we now know of it, were it ever so little and unsatisfactory, to Mesmer? What

can those, who distinguish so sharply between Magnetism and Mesmerism, who give out, under new names (*Siderism* and *Tellurism*), the significant notions of this man as discoveries of their own, or really correct one or two trivial errors—what can they answer, when they are asked who it was that made them acquainted with all that they know of Magnetism, who rendered them so wise as to be capable of justly censuring its discoverer in one thing or another? The Pigmy stands upon the shoulders of the Giant, looks down upon him with contempt, and exclaims—*How tall am I!* Those ideas of the ancients may have given to his mind the first impulse, the direction,—may have conducted him, upon the untrodden path, to the end towards which he strove, and which he attained. But, admitting that Mesmer derived the first idea of his theory and art either in Maxwell, or in any other forgotten author, would that circumstance derogate from his fame? All great men who have lived, or who now live, have been indebted for their knowledge to teachers and to books; they increased that knowledge by their own experience and reflection. But can we justly deny them respect and merit, because the foundation was laid by others? No one would think of refusing to Boerhaave the honourable name of one of the greatest of physicians, because he derived his knowledge from the

writings of Galen and Hippocrates, or esteem the last mentioned as an insignificant empiric, because he copied the prescriptions in the temples of health, and is thus said to have become the father of public medicine. Who will deny to Newton the fame of having discovered the law of gravitation, because Gilbert had previously alluded to it, by viewing the heavenly bodies as immense magnets which attracted and repelled each other, and, by their reciprocal influence, were retained in their orbits? Who will venture the ridiculous assertion, that Columbus did not discover a new quarter of the globe, because America was previously known to its inhabitants; or that Aeronautics are no new invention, because Icarus had already flown over lands and seas on waxen wings?

“To Mesmer, therefore, there must ever remain the originality of his genius and of his invention. He collected and combined the scattered threads which, in the labyrinth of ages and events, conduct us to the spot where the knowledge of the sanative instinct in diseases, and the art of developing it by means of processes which are in themselves restorative, lay sunk and concealed under the ruins of the temples. He called it again into light, and to it we are indebted for an extended science, clearer prospects into the depths of Nature

and the obscurity of the past ; while we had previously been accustomed to deny as impossible, and therefore to reject as absurd, all that individuals had reported of it, because we were yet ignorant of the means and the conditions. A great deal of sound sense and moral courage are required to introduce ideas which will only be recognized as just after the elapse of many years. Nay, even to recognise their truth will require more understanding than falls to the share of most men. If there be any one to whom this assertion appears harsh or offensive, he is at liberty to avail himself of the right, competent to all, of considering himself as an exception.”\*

Such are the claims of Mesmer to public respect and gratitude. Let us remember, that “ the most arduous scientific labours and the most important discoveries have been achieved by men who have looked forward to neglect, contempt, and persecution through life, and have triumphantly endured all, in the assurance that their fame, phoenix-like, would spring forth in full splendour from their humble ashes. It would seem that God has implanted in the noblest spirits of his human family a consciousness of immortality, a certainty that from their Elysian home they shall see justice

\* Dr J. C. L. ZIERMANN ; *Geschichtliche Darstellung des Thierischen Magnetismus*, &c. pp. 225, &c.

awarded ; shall hear the voice of their praise ; shall be cheered by the gratitude and love of coming generations ; shall behold the ever ripening harvest of their labours and their virtues. Posthumous fame is a meed which posterity ought diligently to award when deserved.”\*

The time has surely now arrived, when well-merited, although tardy, justice ought to be done to the character and labours of the calumniated and persecuted discover of Animal Magnetism.

\* *American Monthly Review.*

## CHAPTER XII.

AFTER the retirement of Mesmer, the professors of Animal Magnetism, in France, became divided into three different schools, varying considerably from each other in their respective modes of treatment.

The original school of Mesmer, whose chief seat was at Paris, operated principally by physical means; by touching, rubbing, and pressure with the hand, or by the employment of metal conductors. His disciples made use of magnetic vessels (*baquets\**) and trees, and magnetized baths; they recommended the drinking of magnetized water, and the carrying of magnetized plates of glass upon the stomach; and, in general, their treatment was calculated to produce strong crises and reactions in their patients. They regarded the convulsions which ensued as a remedial process of nature; and, accordingly, they endeavoured to bring

\* The *baquet* was a kind of covered tub, filled with water, iron, glass, &c. which was supposed to contain the magnetic influence; and cords were attached to this vessel, for the purpose of conducting the magnetic virtue to the patients under treatment.

them on by artificial means, and called them *crises*. As the first and great object, therefore, in every magnetic treatment, was to produce such crises, certain rooms, called *chambres de crise*, were fitted up for the purpose; apartments of which the walls and floors were covered with matrasses and cushions, to prevent the convulsive patients from injuring themselves in the access of their crises. Mesmer's idea, that light and sound are peculiarly favourable to the magnetic process, has been already noticed.

A second school was established at Lyons and Ostend, under the direction of the Chevalier Barbarin, who adopted a mode of treatment totally different from the preceding.

The school of Barbarin operated in a purely psychical manner, admitting no other agents in the magnetic process than *faith* and *volition*. For this reason, its disciples were distinguished by the name of the *Spiritualists*. They practised no particular manipulations; any physical operations which they admitted being considered as merely accessory, or auxiliary, and by no means essential to the success of the treatment. They endeavoured, therefore, to produce all the phenomena of Animal Magnetism in their patients, by firm determination, and by the energy of the operator's volition, even at



considerable distances. Their motto was: *Veillez le bien—allez et guerissez !*

The third school was established under the direction of the Marquis de Puységur, at Strasburg, under the name of the *Société Harmonique des amis réunis*. It was distinguished not only by the admirable adaptation of its constitution, but principally by combining, in a happy manner, the physical and psychical treatment, and thus steering a middle course between the schools of Mesmer and Barbarin. The *chambres de crise*—or *chambres d'enfer*, as Puységur called them—were entirely banished from this excellent institution; and the whole magnetic treatment was conducted in a manner the best calculated to insure the repose and comfort of the patients.\* The manipulations,

\* Kluge gives great credit to Puységur for abolishing the *chambres de crise*. Other professors of Animal Magnetism, however, and among these Van Ghert and Ziermann, look upon this matter in a quite different light, and, with Mesmer, consider the crises, when skilfully regulated, as highly salutary. Upon this subject, Ziermann makes the following judicious observations: "Nature cures many diseases only by means of crises, that is, in the meaning in which the word is here used, by violent efforts. In general, it is only the physician who is capable of distinguishing this crisis from the disease itself. His important business is to manage, to moderate, to increase it, according to the nature and necessity of the case. Puységur, Deleuze, and the other respectable French magnetisers, are not physicians—they dread that tumult which they are incapable of controlling—that activity which they cannot direct and re-

when employed, were extremely gentle; and the hands, instead of being brought into contact with

gulate. They are right, and act prudently, in not attempting to excite powers which they cannot govern. But the physician is in a quite different situation. He knows what diseases are cured by Nature through similar efforts: he moderates or avoids them altogether, when it is desirable to do so; but in cases where a contrary procedure is indicated, he excites them with courage and caution. It is a peculiarity of the magnetic treatment, however, that it promotes those crises, developes them earlier, and in a more lively manner, and thus brings the disease sooner to a termination. These are advantages which it possesses in a degree beyond all other means. He who represents these artificial crises, in general, as injurious, and on this account reprobates and rejects them, is ignorant of the very essence and advantages of Magnetism; and instead of rendering it more practically useful, he, by the dissemination of such representations, diminishes the benefits which its application is peculiarly calculated to afford." Hippocrates has a somewhat similar idea: *Ars medica ab eo quod molestum est liberat, et id, ex quo quis agrotat, auferendo, sanitatem reddit. Idem et natura per se facere novit.*

The foregoing views of Dr Ziermann might be confirmed by the authority of our own most learned and respectable physicians. I shall only make the following quotation from the late excellent work of Dr Abercrombie *On the Brain*: "A man mentioned by Dr Russell (*Lond. Med. Obs. and Eng.* vol. i.), after an apoplectic attack, with hemiplegia, recovered the use of his arm in six weeks, but the lower extremity remained perfectly paralytic. After twelve months, in which he made no improvement, he was one day astonished to find that he had some degree of motion of the leg, but it continued only a few minutes. On the same evening he had headach, and in the night *he was seized with a sort of fit, in which the paralytic limb was strongly convulsed, and after this he had slight power of moving it. The fit returned next day, and again in the night, and then left him completely free from paralysis and in perfect health*: he had continued well for eight years

the patient, were frequently kept at some distance from him. In consequence of this mode of treatment, there ensued crises of a quite different kind from those which were known to Mesmer and his

at the time when the account was written. A case somewhat similar, though of shorter standing, occurred to a friend of mine. A middle-aged man was suddenly attacked with hemiplegia and loss of speech, while he was using violent exercise in walking quick or running; all the usual practice was employed without any improvement for a month; *the paralytic limbs then became one day suddenly convulsed, and when this subsided, the paralysis was gone.* In a woman mentioned by Dr Home (*Clinical Experiments*), *hemiplegia of considerable standing was removed by an attack of fever.* "A man mentioned by Mr Squire (*Philosophical Transactions*, vol. 45.), without any previous complaint, except a cold, suddenly lost his speech. He had no other paralytic symptom, and was otherwise in good health, but continued perfectly speechless for four years. He was in general a man of temperate habits, but having at this time been one evening much intoxicated, he fell from his horse three or four times on his return home, and was at last taken into a house near the road, and put to bed. He soon fell asleep, and had a frightful dream, during which, struggling with all his might to call out for help, he did call out, and from that time recovered his speech perfectly."

"Several cases still more remarkable are related by Diemerbroek (*Observat. et Curat. Medicæ*, Obs. x.) A woman, who had been paralytic from the age of six to forty-four, suddenly recovered the perfect use of her limbs, when she was very much terrified during a severe thunder-storm, and was making violent efforts to escape from a chamber in which she had been left alone. A man, who had been many years paralytic, recovered in the same manner, when his house was on fire; and another, who had been ill for six years, recovered suddenly, in a violent paroxysm of anger."—*ABERCROMBIE On the Brain*, 3d edit. pp. 293-294.

immediate disciples: the most agreeable feelings were experienced; the intellectual faculties appeared to be wonderfully increased and exalted, and, in the higher stages, the patient exhibited a very delicate knowledge of his own bodily state, as well as of the internal condition of such other patients as were placed in magnetic connexion (*en rapport*) with him.

This improved treatment, introduced by Puysegur, was subsequently adopted, in a great measure, by all the best magnetizers, and even, it has been said, by Mesmer himself. It is to the same most intelligent magnetizer, too, that we are principally indebted for the discovery of the magnetic Somnambulism, and of its singular phenomena.

I am not aware that any particular school of Animal Magnetism predominates in Germany. In that country, however, the practice of the art is very generally diffused—many scientific and practical works upon the subject have been published—the treatment is almost universally employed and recommended by the most intelligent physicians—much attention is bestowed upon the magnetic phenomena, and great ingenuity is displayed in the formation of theories to account for them.

After the preceding historical sketch of the discovery of Animal Magnetism, and of its general

introduction upon the Continent, it will appear necessary, for the benefit of those who may not hitherto have had an opportunity of studying the subject, or of obtaining any correct information respecting it, that I should make a few observations upon the magnetic power and susceptibility—the peculiar method of treatment—and the effects produced upon the organization of the patient. \*

It is alleged by some that every individual does not possess the capability of operating magnetically upon others; and that even he who does possess the power in some degree, will not always operate beneficially. † Certain properties, partly physical

\* It would swell out this publication to a most inconvenient bulk, were I to enter into any minute detail upon these particulars. All that I can afford is a general view of every branch of the subject, leaving it to the inquisitive reader to prosecute his researches, by consulting the authors I have referred to. To professional men this will be sufficient; and the less that unprofessional persons meddle with the practice of Animal Magnetism the better. Indeed, after the publication of the first edition of this work, had the Faculty taken up the investigation of the subject, as they ought to have done, I proposed to have confined my attention thenceforward entirely to a consideration of the philosophical views suggested by the phenomena. It is owing to the intellectual sloth of the profession that I became, and continue to be, an interloper.

† The following, however, is the opinion of a competent authority: “ Every healthy man has the power of communicating the *vital fluid*; the more healthy he is, the sounder his constitution, the more capable he is of communicating it. The opposite of these conditions produces contrary effects. This

and partly psychical, are said to be requisite in the practical magnetizer; and the fortunate combination of these properties may, in most cases, be considered as a gift of nature. There is a similar inequality in the susceptibility of patients—some being not at all, others very slightly, and others, again, very easily and powerfully affected by the magnetic treatment. In general, strong and healthy persons exhibit little susceptibility; while weak and diseased persons are strongly affected in various ways. \*

With regard to physical constitution, experience seems to have demonstrated, what might otherwise

fluid is transmitted by means of very simple processes, and even without their aid, by the sole act of the will. The act of the will is not necessary to receive it. It is transmitted the more easily, in proportion as the will of the operator is real, strong, and determined. It will, perhaps, be with difficulty believed, that the communication of the fluid is more or less complete, according to the degree in which the will of the operator is more or less developed; but daily experience has enabled us to perceive, that, in order to produce the desired effects, an adept has been obliged to learn to exert his will, as a child is obliged to learn to walk."—*Memoire sur le Fluide Vital, &c.* in the 2d volume of the *Bibliothèque du Magnetisme Animal*.

\* To some of these circumstances, perhaps, we may ascribe the confirmed scepticism of certain persons, who have made trivial and unskilful attempts to bring the magnetic doctrines to the test of experiment. They do not reflect, that the magnetic action, and, consequently, the manifestation of the phenomena, depend upon certain conditions, and that, if these conditions are not fulfilled in the treatment, it is in vain to expect any satisfactory result.

have appeared agreeable to analogy, that the magnetizer ought to possess a preponderance of energy over his patient. A few instances, indeed, have been observed, in which weak persons have magnetized with effect. But such exceptions are said to be extremely rare; and Wienholt attempts to account for them upon the principle, that, in such subjects, the vital energy has a greater tendency to the surface, and therefore a more diffusive efficacy.

The magnetizer ought to possess not merely a strong natural constitution, but also a sound state of bodily health. A magnetizer affected with sickness will not only operate imperfectly, but, besides, runs the risk of communicating his diseased feelings to the patient, and of thus increasing those sufferings which it is his purpose to alleviate. The age of the magnetizer, too, is said to be a matter of considerable importance. The proper age is that in which the corporeal and mental powers have attained their utmost development, and before they have begun to decline; and the doctrinal writers have therefore fixed it within the period between the twenty-fifth and fiftieth years. To these physical qualifications must be added the psychical, consisting of a sound and energetic mind, a lively faith, and a determined, despotic volition.

It has been observed, that different persons are

variously susceptible of the magnetic influence. This circumstance will be best understood when we come to speak of the effects produced by the treatment.

The magnetic treatment is either simple or compound. In the former case, the magnetizer operates solely by himself; in the latter, he makes use of certain external *media*. The simple magnetic treatment is usually administered with the hand, and is thence called *manipulation*. But the magnetizer can also operate without employing the hand—by breathing, or by fixing the eyes or the thoughts, or both, steadily and intensely upon the patient. When the magnetic connexion has been previously established, a single fixed look of the magnetizer, accompanied with energetic volition, has frequently been found sufficient to throw the patient into the state of magnetic sleep, or somnambulism.

The magnetic treatment by manipulation comprehends several modes of touching and stroking with the hand, which could not be described here particularly without leading us into prolixity.\*

\* I have had several queries addressed to me, both by professional and by unprofessional persons, relative to these modes of manipulating; but the inquirers may easily satisfy themselves by consulting the works I have referred to. For my own part, I am not disposed to assign the preference to any particular method, especially, since all have been occasionally employed with success, and the effects have been frequently produced



The usual method is to stroke repeatedly with the palms of the hands and the fingers, in one direction downwards, from the head to the feet; and, in returning, to throw the hands round in a semi-circle, turning the palms outwards, in order not to disturb the effects of the direct stroke. To magnetize in the contrary direction—that is, from the feet upwards towards the head—not only counteracts the effects of the former method, but frequently operates, of itself, prejudicially, especially in the case of irritable subjects. If we attempt to operate with the back of the hand, no effect whatever will probably be produced upon the patient.

If, in the course of this process, the hands or fingers of the operator are made actually to touch the body of the patient, it is called manipulation *with contact*; if, on the contrary, the operation is conducted at some distance, it is called manipulation *in distans*. The manipulation with contact is of two kinds: It is accompanied either with considerable pressure, or with slight touching—manipulation with *strong* or with *light* contact. The manipulation with strong contact is certainly the most ancient and the most universally prevalent mode of operating; and traces of it are to be found in

- without any manipulation at all. The manipulations I should consider chiefly useful in fixing the attention, and strengthening the will.

almost all ages and countries. In manipulating with light contact, the hand, indeed, is conducted very lightly along the body of the patient; but the magnetizer must perform this operation with the utmost energy, and must always have the desire of applying strong pressure to it.

The manipulation *in distans* is administered at a distance of generally from two to six inches from the patient's body; in the case of very susceptible persons, it is performed at a still greater distance. The effects of this mode of manipulating are less intense than those produced by actual contact, and, besides, it requires a greater energy of volition on the part of the magnetizer. It is, however, frequently employed in magnetizing very irritable patients, who cannot endure any stronger method.\*

It would be tedious to enumerate and describe all the various kinds of manipulation, with regard to which the reader will receive ample information by consulting the elementary works upon this subject. All of these, however, may be combined together in the magnetic treatment, or employed

\* Wienholt, however, observed several cases, in which the patients could not endure the manipulation *in distans*. (See *Heilkraft*, &c. vol. i. p. 292, *et seq.* vol. ii. p. 349, and vol. iii. pp. 118, 119.) Kluge observed the same thing in one of his patients, but could not discover the reason of it. (Kluge; p. 337, note c.)

separately, according to circumstances. Much, of course, must depend upon the skill and judgment of the magnetizer, who will vary his modes of operating according to the effects produced, and the degree of sensibility exhibited by the patient.

I must not, however, pass unnoticed the method of administering Animal Magnetism adopted and recommended by Professor Kluge, in whose work the whole process is described with great minuteness.\*

Before commencing the magnetic manipulations, it is necessary that the magnetizer and the patient should be conveniently placed; in order that the former may be enabled freely to perform his operations, and the latter prepared for the expected crisis of sleep. A semi-recumbent posture of the patient is, upon the whole, the most convenient, the body being, at the same time, so far bent, that the operator can reach, without difficulty, from the crown of the head to the toes. Should the patient be unable to leave his bed, we must endeavour to place him in a proper bended position. It is not necessary that the patient should be completely undressed, only no silk covering should be allowed to intervene.

\* See C. A. F. Kluge, *Versuch einer Darstellung des Animalischen Magnetismus*, &c. Berlin, 1815.

The best situation, perhaps, in which a magnetic patient can be placed, is in an easy arm-chair, with his hands resting on the arms, his feet upon a foot-stool, and his knees bent somewhat forward. The magnetizer then places himself upon a common chair, opposite to the patient, and so near as to be able to enclose his knees within his own, but without designedly touching them.

When the magnetizer has thus placed the patient and himself in the most convenient attitude, he proceeds to the manipulations, which are distinguished into the *preparatory* and the *effective*. The preparatory manipulations were formerly called *placing in connexion or affinity* (*mettre en rapport, en harmonie*); denoting that they were employed for the purpose of establishing such a sympathy between the nervous systems of the magnetizer and the patient, as should render the subsequent operations more certain and effectual.

Some magnetizers, and amongst others Wienholt, it is said, proceeded at once to the effective treatment, without any preparation. Kluge, however, strongly recommends a contrary method, and, apparently, with good reason; because, otherwise, especially in the case of very irritable patients, the preparatory manipulations enable them to endure the more effective manipulations, which, without

such preparation, it is alleged, might be very painful.

The preparatory manipulations are performed in the following manner. The operator lays hold of the shoulders of the patient with both his hands, in such a manner that the balls of his thumbs are placed in the arm-pits, and the other fingers rest upon the shoulders of the patient. In this position he continues for a few seconds, excites in himself the intention of pressing the shoulders together, and then laying hold of the upper part of the arms, glides down to the elbows, tarries there for a little, and then proceeds down to the hands, where he applies the points of his thumbs to those of the patient, and allows the other fingers to rest upon the back of his hands. He then returns, by means of the dorsal manipulation (*i. e.* the hands being thrown round in a semicircle, in the manner already described), to the shoulders, and repeats the same operation two or three times; after which he commences the effective manipulations, of which a general description has already been given.

No person ought to attempt the magnetic treatment, unless he has complied with the requisite conditions, or without having previously prepared himself by an attentive study of the best works which have been written on the subject by practi-

cal authors, such as those of Tardy du Montravel, Puysegur, Gmelin, Heineken, Wienholt, Deleuze, Kluge, &c. in order that he may thoroughly understand the proper methods, and profit by their experience, when analogous cases occur in his own practice.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE effects produced upon the organism of the patient, by the operations described in the preceding chapter, are truly wonderful; and, considering the apparent inadequacy of the means employed, can scarcely be expected to obtain belief, excepting from those who have actually experienced or witnessed them. These effects are very various, and may be divided into two classes. The first consists of those general effects, which are produced upon the entire bodily frame, and which are not merely periodical, but continue throughout the whole treatment. The second comprehends those which affect only some particular functions of the organization, and which are not constantly manifested, but only at certain times, and especially during the magnetic manipulations. These last may be reckoned among the particular effects of Animal Magnetism.

The general effects of Animal Magnetism, which may be regarded as permanent states of the organization, and which almost always manifest themselves, in a greater or less degree, in all subjects

whose diseases are of such a nature as to indicate the application of this mode of treatment, and which, therefore, seem to originate from the sympathy of the whole body, are chiefly the following:—

1. A general excitement and strengthening of the vital functions, without any considerable *stimulus*, in the nervous, muscular, vascular, and digestive systems. Persons who could not be strengthened by corroborant medicines of any kind, have been restored to health, from a state of great debility, in a short time, by means of the magnetic treatment. The application of this remedy quickens the pulse, produces an increased degree of warmth, greater sensitive power, and mental cheerfulness. The appetite and the digestion are increased; the bowels, which had previously been kept open by artificial means, now become regular; and the patient acquires a relish for such kinds of food as are good for him, and an aversion from such as are injurious. Animal Magnetism also promotes all the other secretions. In those constitutional complaints which are peculiar to the female sex, it is said to be the most certain, the most powerful, and most efficacious remedy hitherto discovered. The treatment seems to operate principally upon the great concatenation of sympathetic nerves (the *plexus solaris*), situated in the *abdomen*, and, by means of



their various ramifications, to communicate its influence to the rest of the system.

2. It affords a gentle *stimulus*, pervading, generally, the whole surface of the body, by which all disturbed harmony and diseased local action are removed, and the equilibrium again restored. In this way, Animal Magnetism soothes the most violent action of the nervous system, the tumult of the muscles, and the over-exertion of the vital functions in the whole economy.

3. It draws off the increased vital action from the diseased parts, and conducts it to others. By this means, a twofold advantage is attained. In the *first* place, the excited action, or irritation, is carried away from the internal and more noble organs to such whose violent action is attended with less injury to the system; and, in the *second* place, the salutary vital action is strengthened and increased in particular debilitated organs. The consequences of the magnetic treatment, therefore, are — *soothing* and *strengthening*. In most instances, the agitation produced by the diseased organization is gradually allayed, until, at length, a perfect recovery is effected; because,

4. Animal Magnetism occasions a diminution and total removal of the existing cause of the morbid action of the nervous system.

The particular effects of Animal Magnetism,

which are not the necessary consequences of its application, but only occasionally manifest themselves periodically, in a greater or less degree, in individual cases, are exceedingly various, and seem to depend, in a great measure, upon the peculiar physical and moral constitution, not only of the particular patient, but also of the operating magnetizer.

It sometimes happens, that no perceptible effect is produced upon the patient during the magnetic treatment, of which the efficacy only appears in the gradual restoration to health. Dr Passavant mentions a case of this description which occurred under his own eye, where a girl was cured of St Vitus's dance in this way, without even exhibiting any of the ordinary phenomena of the magnetic treatment. Wienholt, in a passage formerly quoted, informs us, that similar cases occurred in the course of his practice. In most instances, however, the magnetic patient experiences a variety of symptoms of a nature more or less remarkable. So various, indeed, and so peculiar are these effects of the magnetic processes, that it appears almost impossible to arrange or classify them under any general heads. Such a classification, it is true, has been attempted at different times by Gmelin, Heineken, Wienholt, Hufeland, and others; and Kluge, availing himself of the labours of his predecessors, has

distinguished the phenomena produced by the magnetic treatment into six classes; but he admits, at the same time, that this classification is still a mere essay, and necessarily imperfect.

This classification, of which I shall presently give an abstract, follows the order of the different degrees through which the patient has been observed to pass during the magnetic treatment.

The *first* degree presents no very remarkable phenomena. The intellect and the senses still retain their usual powers and susceptibilities. For this reason, this first degree has been denominated the degree of *waking*.

In the *second* degree, most of the senses still remain in a state of activity. That of vision only is impaired; the eye withdrawing itself gradually from the power of the will. This second degree, in which the sensibility is partially disturbed, is, by some magnetizers, called the *half-sleep*, or the *imperfect crisis*.

In the *third* degree, the whole of the organs, through the medium of which our correspondence with the external world is carried on (the senses), refuse to perform their respective functions, and the patient is placed in that unconscious state of existence which is called the *magnetic sleep*.

In the *fourth* degree, the patient awakes, as it were, within himself, and his consciousness re-

turns. He is in a state which can neither be properly called sleeping nor waking, but which appears to be something between the two. When in this state, he is again placed in a very peculiar relation towards the external world, which will be explained by examples in the sequel. This fourth degree has been distinguished in the writings of the animal magnetists by the name of the *perfect crisis*, or *simple somnambulism*.

In the *fifth* degree, the patient is placed in what is called the state of self-intuition. When in this situation, he is said to obtain a clear knowledge of his own internal mental and bodily state;—is enabled to calculate, with accuracy, the phenomena of disease which will naturally and inevitably occur, and to determine what are their most appropriate and effectual remedies. He is also said to possess the same faculty of internal inspection with regard to other persons who have been placed in magnetic connexion (*en rapport*) with him. This state, also, I shall afterwards have occasion to illustrate by examples. From this fifth degree, all the subsequent magnetic states are comprehended under the denomination of *lucidity*, or *lucid vision* (Fr. *Clairvoyance*; Germ. *Hellsehen*.)

In the *sixth* degree, the *lucid vision* which the patient possessed in the former degree, becomes

wonderfully increased, and extends to all objects, near and at a distance, in space and in time : hence it has been called the degree of *universal lucidity*. This exalted state of the faculties, as may easily be supposed, is comparatively of very rare occurrence ; but some examples of it, likewise, will be adduced hereafter.

No patient, it is said, can reach the higher degrees of magnetism, without having previously passed through the lower. Individuals, it is true, are sometimes placed in the higher degrees at the very first magnetic treatment ; but they are supposed to have previously passed through the intermediate stages in so rapid a manner as rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the transitions. External as well as internal influences, not yet sufficiently ascertained, dispose a patient, more or less, at particular times, to attain a certain degree ; and hence, the magnetic sleep is never permanently the same, but always variable, depending probably upon the predisposition of the subject, and other inducing causes. \*

\* It is a very great mistake of the ignorant to suppose that the higher states of magnetism can be produced in all individuals, and at all times, at pleasure. Even simple somnambulism, as a consequence of the magnetic treatment, is comparatively rare, and the more exalted state of *Clairvoyance* still more so. It appears to me, likewise, to be a great abuse of the practice (I suspect too prevalent in France), to aim continually at

I have thus attempted to describe, as concisely as possible, the processes employed in Animal Magnetism, and to point out briefly the most remarkable characteristic symptoms produced by the treatment. I am quite aware that what I have said upon this branch of the subject will be considered unsatisfactory by the inquisitive student. But, for reasons already adduced, it would have been very inconvenient for me to have entered into any farther details. I have still a great deal of curious information to lay before the public, which, as it must be new to many, and will, I have no doubt, appear very extraordinary to all, I am anxious to state at some length; the more especially, because many of the facts, the existence of which I propose to demonstrate by evidence, have been roundly and confidently denied by very eminent scientific men; and besides, I consider these facts as not only of great importance in themselves, but as well suited for inductive investigation.

But before I proceed to this branch of my subject, it may be proper for me to make a few observations upon the theory put forth by the first French Commissioners, in order to account for the

the production of Somnambulism, and the development of its higher phenomena. The primary object, in every magnetic treatment, ought to be the cure of disease, to which every thing else should be held subordinate. Experiments of mere curiosity should be as much as possible avoided.

phenomena of Animal Magnetism, which appears to have been framed with such consummate art, skill, and plausibility, as to have imposed upon all those learned and scientific men who were ignorant of this peculiar subject, and, in a great degree, to have checked, for a season, all serious investigation into the matter.

This theory ascribed the whole of the magnetic phenomena to *imagination*, *imitation*, and *attouchement*.

The last element of this theory is at once overthrown by the single decisive fact, that all the magnetic phenomena are frequently produced without touching the patient at all.

The influence of the imagination, and of the imitative principle, seem at first sight—and at first sight only—much more capable of affording an adequate explanation of the facts; but the activity of these principles is rejected as absurd by every practical magnetizer, as well as by every intelligent opponent of the system;—in short, by every person who knows any thing of the matter; and besides, a great many, if not all of the phenomena, will be found, upon due consideration, to be of such a nature, that they cannot be rationally accounted for upon any such theory. Sleep, for example, is a very common effect of the magnetic treatment; and I should like to be informed whe-

ther sleep, in any instance, can be produced by exciting the imagination, or by imitation, where, as in the case of the solitary treatment, there is nothing to imitate. Even Dr Stieglitz, an opponent, whose work appeared so long ago as the year 1814, ridicules the idea of attempting to trace the magnetic phenomena to any such sources. "A great multitude of facts," says the Doctor, "which, allowing for some little variation in the more minute shades, still coincide in the most essential points, force complete conviction upon us. The number of credible observers who attest them, and whose representations bear the stamp of truth, has increased so much within the last twenty or thirty years, in many parts of France, Germany, and Switzerland, as to overthrow all scepticism on the subject."—P. 17. "Have those seized the right point of view, who ascribe all these phenomena to the influence of a diseased imagination, or to the excitement of sexual passion? The partizans of Animal Magnetism have a right to complain, when their antagonists attempt to annihilate many volumes of observations with these turns and tirades, eternally repeated, although long since refuted. Indeed, this is merely to seek an outlet for escape;—to withdraw, in the most convenient manner, from the investigation of truth;—to prevent our apathetic repose from being rudely disturbed, by



adopting shallow hypotheses, which are totally inapplicable to the subject;—and to parry off attacks upon preconceived opinions, which we are neither willing to abandon, nor seriously to defend.” \*

“Imagination and sensual excitement,” says the celebrated Dr Hufeland, “are not the causes of these phenomena; for we have decisive facts to prove, that the effects have appeared without the slightest co-operation of the imagination, and that persons of the same sex have produced them upon each other.” To the same effect, the learned

\* “In the times of ignorance, superstition laid hold of all phenomena, and without searching for their real causes, every thing was ascribed to the immediate agency of Divine Power, or to the intervention of the devil. At present, the imagination plays nearly the same part; and in physiology it is considered as the cause of all that appears to be otherwise inexplicable. The best established facts are, at first, declared to be gross errors, and when, at length, they have become incontestable, they are attributed to the imagination; but no one is capable of explaining in what manner this spiritual faculty produces the physical results.

“Science, however, teaches us nothing, when it endows the imagination with supernatural powers; and the truth is, that, in doing so, it merely changes the name of something that is unknown. Ignorance concealed under another word is still ignorance, and the accumulation of phenomena adds little to our knowledge, so long as none of them are explained.

“Imaginary hypotheses can never hold the place of truth, nor dispense with the necessity of investigation.”—CHARDEL, *Essai de Psychologie physiologique*. Paris, 1831.

It is rather remarkable that Dr Stieglitz, although he opposes the general introduction of Animal Magnetism into medicine, strongly recommends its application in all *desperate cases*.

Sprengel observes, in his *Institutions of Medicine*, that the imagination of the patient is never observed to be increased previous to the manifestation of the phenomena, and that the effects are not different in those persons who have entertained the greatest doubts regarding the efficacy of the treatment, and in those who never heard a word about it. "Hence," says he, "I hold it to be clear that the imagination has nothing to do in the production of these phenomena; and this is confirmed by Gmelin, who relates that magnetic patients have frequently witnessed convulsions in others without being themselves affected in a similar manner."\*

Sprengel also mentions another decisive fact in regard to the alleged influence of the imagination in the magnetic process—a fact well known to all practical magnetisers. It is simply this,—that if we attempt to manipulate in contrary directions, the

\* Ea autem methodus quosnam effectus producat, dictu est mirabile. Plerique jucundas habent sensationes blandi caloris aut etiam auræ quasi descendentis per nervos. Neque unquam imaginatio ante accessum eum augetur: neque aliter se habent ii effectus in hominibus, qui vel maxime de efficacia earum tractationum dubitaverant, neque alios videbis in iis, qui nunquam de ea re quidquam audiverunt. Unde imaginationem profecto nihil posse, ut ea phænomena nascantur, exploratum habeo; quod confirmatum ab Eberhardo Gmelino lego, qui magnetismo eo imbutos refert sæpe convulsivos aliorum adfectus conspexisse sine ulla noxa.—Sprengel; *Institut. Medicinæ*, tom. ii. p. 300, sect. 396.

usual effects will not be produced, whilst others of a totally different nature will be manifested.\*

A great deal has been occasionally said with regard to the dangers that may arise from the prac-

\* *Maxime autem veritatem ejus methodi et observatorum candorem probat constantissimus contrariorum tractuum effectus. Quodsi enim vel frictionem vel etiam imaginationem accusaveris, neutra agere in contrariis contrariorum tractuum effectibus potest. Pallor enim subitaneus, et frigus, et nervorum distentio, nunquam a frictione simili, contrariis duntaxat tractibus suscepta, oriri possunt.—Sprengel; *Institut. Medicinæ*, tom. ii. p. 305, sect. 398.*

Among the numerous doctrinal writers and practical magnetizers, the only one whom I have found, in recent times, adhering to the theory of imagination, and of imagination alone, is M. Bertrand, who published a work upon Animal Magnetism in 1826. But so far as I can perceive, M. Bertrand seems to know nothing of the magnetic treatment as a sanative process; he appears to consider it merely as a means of producing somnambulism. *Quant à moi, says he, je crois aux phenomenes du somnambulisme, et j'écris ce livre pour prouver que le magnetisme est une pure chimere.* It is rather difficult exactly to comprehend what M. Bertrand really means; but so far as his opinions can be guessed at, they are directly at variance with those of every other individual who has a competent knowledge of the subject.

I may be permitted to observe, that the opinions of Dr Sprengel, upon this question, are the more valuable, not only on account of his great learning and high reputation, but in consequence of the circumstance, that he was originally a sceptic in regard to Animal Magnetism, and wrote a small work against it, but subsequently became a convert to the doctrine; which, indeed, with few exceptions, is now universally admitted by all the most eminent physicians and physiologists upon the Continent. In Germany we know only a single disbeliever of the facts of magnetism, among several opponents of the practice. That disbeliever is Rudolphi. And what are his arguments?

tice of Animal Magnetism ; but these dangers are, in a great measure, chimerical ; they could only be apprehended from the ignorant and unskilful application of the treatment ; and nothing of the kind is to be dreaded from the present improved practice. In the hands of the intelligent physician, who knows how to employ it, it is a safe and most effectual remedy in many diseases. Upon this subject, Dr Ziermann observes, that “ if, in the earlier magnetic associations, the storm, once excited, was allowed to rage, in the nervous system, in uncontrolled convulsions—if the salutary activity of nature was cherished into a destructive organic tumult ; it was, indeed, very meritorious to put a stop to these extravagances and abuses, and to warn the public against them. Here, however, the blame is not imputable to magnetism, but to the ignorance and imprudence of those, who, without medical knowledge, or without a sufficient acquaintance with the new method, attempted the cure of diseases by its means ; and a great part of the abuses and mischiefs of all kinds, which must necessarily have arisen from this cause, as well as from the illusions under which enthusiasts, and others entertaining false and exaggerated views, plied this occupation, is to be ascribed to those, who, although best qualified by their attainments to direct this important

business, stood altogether aloof. As soon as the intelligent physician avails himself of this method of cure, as soon as it is wrested out of the hands of the unprofessional, there is as little danger to be apprehended from it, as from the poisons and surgical instruments which we are in the daily practice of employing."

An opinion in some respects similar to that of Dr Ziermann, upon the subject of Animal Magnetism, was expressed by the late Mr Dugald Stewart, in one of the last of those valuable works with which he enriched the philosophical literature of his country. The ingenious professor appears to have been well aware of the irresistible weight of the evidence which had been adduced in favour of the facts; but had he been better acquainted with the magnetic treatment, and the nature of the phenomena, his candid mind would certainly have led him to reject that absurd and exploded theory, upon which, along with the first French Commissioners, he attempted to account for the facts.

"Among all the phenomena, however," says Mr Stewart, "to which the subject of imitation has led our attention, none are, perhaps, so wonderful as those which have been recently brought to light, in consequence of the philosophical inquiries occasioned by the medical pretensions of Mesmer and his associates. That these pretensions in-

volved much of ignorance, or of imposture, or of both, in their authors, has, I think, been fully demonstrated in the very able report of the French academicians; but does it follow from this, that the *facts* witnessed and authenticated by these academicians should share in the disgrace incurred by the empirics who disguised or misrepresented them? For my own part, it appears to me, that the general conclusions established by Mesmer's practice, with respect to the physical effects of the principle of imitation and of the faculty of imagination (more particularly in cases where they operate together), are incomparably more curious, than if he had actually demonstrated the existence of his boasted fluid. Nor can I see any good reason why a physician, who admits the efficacy of the *moral* agents employed by Mesmer, should, in the exercise of his profession, scruple to copy whatever processes are necessary for subjecting them to his command, any more than he would hesitate about employing a new *physical* agent, such as electricity or galvanism. The arguments to the contrary, alleged by the Commissioners, only shew that the influence of imagination and of imitation is susceptible of a great abuse in ignorant or in wicked hands;—and may not the same thing be said of all the most valuable remedies we possess? Nay, are not the mischievous consequences which have actually been occa-

sioned by the pretenders to Animal Magnetism, the strongest of all encouragements to attempt such an examination of the principles upon which the effects really depend, as may give to scientific practitioners the management of agents so peculiarly efficacious and overbearing? Is not this mode of reasoning perfectly analogous to that upon which medical inquirers are accustomed to proceed, when they discover any new substance possessed of *poisonous* qualities? Is not this considered as a strong presumption, at least, that it is capable of being converted into a vigorous remedy, if its appropriate and specific disorder could only be traced; and has it not often happened, that the prosecution of this idea has multiplied the resources of the healing art?"\*

\* *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*; vol. iii. 4to. London, 1827. Pp. 221, 222.

It is, perhaps, not generally known, that besides the reports of which I have spoken, the Commissioners presented a secret report to the Minister of State, in which they represented Mesmerism in the worst possible colours, and as extremely dangerous in a moral point of view. The Commissioners did not publish this report themselves, but it afterwards found its way to the press. It is full of exaggeration; and, at all events, totally inapplicable to Animal Magnetism as now practised.

## CHAPTER XIV.

IN the preceding chapters, I have given my readers an account of the early history of the magnetic opinions and practices—of the origin and progress of Animal Magnetism ; and I have also endeavoured to make them sufficiently acquainted with the nature of the processes, as well as of all those appearances which generally present themselves during the treatment adopted by Mesmer and his disciples. Of these last, as may have been observed, Sleep—although by no means an invariable consequence of the magnetic manipulations, nor essentially necessary to their sanative efficacy—is by far the most common ; and it usually manifests itself, after a longer or shorter period, according to the degree of energy possessed by the operator, or the greater or less susceptibility of the patient, or in consequence of a combination of both causes. It is proper to mention, however, that, in the opinion of all the experienced practical magnetizers, this artificial sleep is something very different from the natural ; and I conceive it is quite



impossible to witness, with attention and discrimination, one or more cases of the kind, without being satisfied of the reality of this distinction.\* It

\* Amongst a variety of other instances, the following case, reported by M. Deleuze, is quite decisive of the fact above stated, besides presenting some serious difficulties to those who are still disposed to adhere to the exploded imagination hypothesis.

“ I was called in to magnetize a child of eleven years of age, who was very ill, and whom I had the good fortune to cure after a treatment of two months. At the third sitting, she became somnambulist; and two days afterwards, I produced somnambulism in an instant. As my other avocations did not permit me to visit my patient during the day, at the end of a week I agreed with her parents to see her every evening at nine o'clock, and to magnetize her during her sleep. When I arrived, the child, who had been in bed since between seven and eight o'clock, had fallen asleep, and her sleep was so sound that no noise could awaken her; she could even be shaken without interrupting her repose. After talking for some time with her parents, I approached the bed of the patient, stretched my hand over her, and in one minute she passed into somnambulism. She then answered my questions—she told me how I ought to magnetize her—she announced to me what symptoms she should experience next day, and pointed out what remedies I ought to give her. When the sitting had continued a quarter of an hour, she said, ‘ You must awaken me.’ I answered, ‘ You were asleep when I came—go to sleep again.’ ‘ That is impossible,’ she replied; ‘ I cannot pass from the state in which I now am to the natural sleep; and this state, if too much prolonged, would do me harm.’ I then awakened her with a single gesture. She wished us all good night, and turning her head on the pillow, fell asleep again. The same phenomenon was repeated every day for six weeks.”  
—*Defense du Magnet. Anim.* p. 154.

M. Deleuze mentions several other instances in which the same thing occurred.

appears to be the result of an entirely peculiar state of the organism—an affection *sui generis*—and, if not identical with, at least to bear a close analogy to, that state of somnolency, which is frequently found to precede the somnambulistic or ecstatic crisis. Indeed, in a variety of instances, this artificial or magnetic sleep passes into actual Somnambulism—a state in which, as will be seen in the sequel, while the corporeal organs are apparently dormant, and insensible to external impressions, the patient still possesses the power of speech and of locomotion; there frequently occurs a vicarious transference of the functions of the faculties to different parts of the nervous system;\* while both

\* I am aware that this is one of the most extraordinary, and, to those unacquainted with the evidence, one of the most incredible facts of which I have undertaken to demonstrate the occasional occurrence. I am also aware that all our most eminent physiologists are of opinion that the thing is impossible. I quote the following passage from Dr Roget's *Bridgewater Treatise* (vol. ii. p. 375, note).

“The credulity of the public has sometimes been imposed upon by persons who pretended to see by means of their fingers; thus, at Liverpool, the celebrated Miss M'Avoy contrived for a long time to persuade a great number of persons that she really possessed this miraculous power. *Equally unworthy of credit are all the stories of persons, under the influence of Animal Magnetism, hearing sounds addressed to the pit of the stomach, and reading the pages of a book applied to the skin over that organ.*”

Now, this is a mere *dictum*—an opinion opposed to a multitude of well observed facts; and however high my respect for Dr Roget's talents and acquirements, he must pardon me for say-

the senses and the intellectual faculties appear to be exercised with an extraordinary degree of delicacy, vigour, and acuteness. This state of Somnambulism is sometimes more, sometimes less, perfectly developed; a circumstance which probably

ing that there is an authority which I am disposed, in all questions of this kind, to estimate much higher than his—the authority of Nature. *Amicus Plato, &c.* Even did the possibility of this and other phenomena depend upon the authority of man's judgment, I could oppose to the opinion of Dr Roget, those of men whose names, without any disparagement even to that learned gentleman, may be placed at least upon a level with his—the names of La Place, Cuvier, Petetin, Puysegur, Deleuze, Wienholt, Hufeland, Olbers, Treviranus, Reil, Sprengel, Schelling, Eschenmayer, Kieser, Nasse, and a multitude of others, equally competent to observe the phenomena of nature, and equally incapable of misrepresenting the facts they witnessed.

I always thought the alleged detection of Miss M'Avoy's pretended imposture, to say the least of it, exceedingly doubtful; and I have occasion to know that many eminent professional men, who took no part in the discussion, were of the same opinion.

I would respectfully remind Dr Roget of the expressions made use of by himself, in a passage formerly quoted from his otherwise admirable, and truly philosophical *Bridgewater Treatise*.

“In place of the simple combinations of elements, and the simple properties of mineral bodies, all organic structures, even the most minute, present exceedingly complicated arrangements, and a prolonged succession of phenomena, so varied and so anomalous, as to be utterly irreducible to the known laws which govern inanimate matter.”

Finally, I would humbly request Dr Roget to examine the evidence I have adduced in this publication, and then to state whether and how far his *prima facie* opinion has been modified by a consideration of the facts; or whether he requires still farther evidence—and of what nature, and to what amount.

depends partly upon constitutional causes, and partly, as in the case of the magnetic sleep, upon the energy of the operator, and the susceptibility of the patient.

In order to enable my readers fully to comprehend, and duly to appreciate, the very extraordinary facts which I shall presently have occasion to bring under their notice, it is indispensably necessary that they should have paid great attention to the inferior and more ordinary phenomena of Animal Magnetism, and their several gradations ; and also that they should make themselves acquainted with those analogous cases, which occur in the general medical practice ; otherwise, their situation would resemble that of persons brought suddenly out of total or comparative darkness into a brilliantly illuminated picture-gallery, where their eyes might be dazzled and their judgment confounded ; but they would be, for some time, incapable of enduring the light, or of distinguishing the surrounding objects. Every doctrine of extensive application has its alphabet, its rudiments, its grammar ; and to attempt to introduce individuals at once, and without any previous preparation, to the phenomena manifested in the higher stages of Somnambulism, would be pretty much the same thing as if we were to request them to read some difficult pages of a particular volume, before they had

learnt the language in which it was written, or to require them to solve a complicated problem in the higher mathematical analysis, while they were still ignorant of the elementary rules of arithmetic. I am the more earnest in insisting upon the necessity of this preparatory study, because I have generally found that a great proportion of the unenlightened sceptics in regard to the reality of the facts of Animal Magnetism, however learned in other matters, have invariably been disposed to fasten upon some of the higher and more extraordinary phenomena of Somnambulism, which they at once, and in consummate ignorance of the subject, pronounce to be impossible and incredible; while they, at the same time, attempt to hold up all those who have carefully investigated the matter, examined the evidence, and ascertained the truth of the facts, to the contempt and derision of mankind. I trust that there is not one of my readers in the predicament I have just described. I would hope that, from serious attention to the preceding chapters of this publication, accompanied with private study and investigation, they are now fully prepared to follow me to the consideration of still more striking though recondite truths, which, without such initiation, they would probably have regarded with the utmost incredulity.

But, in order to dispel any lurking remains of

suspicious scepticism, which may still weigh upon the minds of those to whom these pages are addressed, and to convince them that the phenomena to be hereafter submitted to their attention are not mere inventions of the professors of Animal Magnetism, I propose first to bring under their notice an analogous class of facts, many of which were observed long before the introduction of the magnetic treatment, and all of them without any reference to that discovery: I allude to the phenomena of the natural Somnambulism.

Somnambulism—as all who have inquired into the subject are probably aware—constitutes a very uncommon, and a very peculiar state of the human organism.\* Fortunately, although of comparatively rare occurrence, many well authenticated and mi-

\* Dr Bertrand, in his treatise *On Somnambulism*, distinguishes, I think correctly, four species of that extraordinary affection: 1st, The *essential* (idiopathic?) somnambulism, which occasionally takes place in some individuals, otherwise apparently healthy, during their ordinary sleep, in consequence of a particular predisposition of the nervous system (*Noctambulism*): 2dly, The *symptomatic*, which is sometimes observed to occur during the course of certain diseases, and is considered as a symptom or crisis of the complaint: 3dly, The *artificial*, which frequently occurs as a consequence of the magnetic treatment; and, 4thly, The *ecstatic*, which is produced by a high exaltation of the mind, and becomes infectious by imitation, in such persons as are predisposed and subjected to the same influences: Of this last species, the *devotional ecstasis* is perhaps the most frequent, and the most remarkable.

nutely observed instances of the natural somnambulism are upon record; and they present phenomena so remarkable, and so interesting in many important points of view, that, since my attention was first directed to this curious subject, I have frequently wondered how it could happen that they should have been so long overlooked, disregarded, or, at least, left without sufficient investigation, by physicians and physiologists. I can only account for this extraordinary neglect upon the principle, that these facts were little calculated to afford their support to the prevalent systems of a material and mechanical physiology;—systems which, I apprehend, must crumble in pieces, when, guided by the torch of truth, we shall have explored, with greater care and exactness, the more secret phenomena of Nature

Somnambulists,\* or sleep-walkers, are persons who, apparently in a state of profound sleep, rise from their beds at night, traverse the most inaccessible places without awaking, and successfully perform the most delicate and difficult operations, whether intellectual or mechanical; and all this in the dark, and frequently with their eyes closed, as

\* I use the words *somnambulism* and *somnambulist* as generic terms, to denote *sleep-talkers* as well as *sleep-walkers*. This, perhaps, is not strictly correct, but it is very convenient. The affections are of the same nature, and frequently found in combination.

in the ordinary state of sleep. It has been observed, also, that individuals, while in this state, occasionally manifest a superior knowledge of subjects and of languages, which they had not previously studied, so as to remember them, or with which they had been but imperfectly acquainted. It is likewise a striking peculiarity of this state of existence, that, upon awaking, the individual who had thus insensibly performed all these operations, retains no recollection of anything that passed while he was under the influence of somnambulism.

It is worthy of notice, too, that the acts of the somnambulist are almost always performed with a degree of freedom, boldness, and precision, superior to what he manifests when awake; and that he generally succeeds in accomplishing every thing he attempts. So far as I am aware, there is no instance of a somnambulist awaking spontaneously in the midst of any operation he has once undertaken; nor of his perishing amidst the dangers which he frequently encounters. There are, it is true, many instances of somnambulists who have perished, in consequence of having been suddenly awakened by the imprudent alarm of the witnesses of those perils to which they were apparently exposed; but the general experience of all times seems to lead us to the conclusion, that the somnambulist is guided by other senses or instincts—



that he is protected from injury by other means and guarantees of security than those by which his conduct is regulated in his ordinary waking state. So long as he is left undisturbed in his proceedings, he acts fearlessly, and is safe; a sudden awakening alone, by restoring him to his natural state, and depriving him of the protection of that instinct which governed his actions, causes him to perish.

In somnambulism, when the *crisis*, as it is sometimes called, is perfect, the functions of the corporeal sensitive organs seem to be entirely suspended, and the soul, or internal sense, is found to energise, if I may be allowed the expression, independently of the body. Such, at least, is the only adequate explanation we can give of the facts, until some philosopher shall find himself enabled to account for them satisfactorily upon some more material physiological principle. In this state, too, there occasionally occurs that most extraordinary, that apparently unaccountable phenomenon, already alluded to—the vicarious transference of the faculties from their appropriate organs to other parts of the nervous system;—a phenomenon, than which there is nothing more marvellous and incredible, yet nothing more clearly and conclusively demonstrated within the whole circle of the magnetic doctrines—I may say, within the entire

limits of science.\* From all this, it seems clear, that the somnambulist is placed in a state of exist-

\* I lately quoted a *dictum* of Dr Roget's upon this subject, upon which I took the liberty of making a few observations; and I must now use the same freedom in commenting upon some passages of Sir Charles Bell's *Bridgewater Treatise*, which, although in a more indirect manner, seem calculated to throw discredit upon the fact alluded to in the text.

Sir Charles lays down the proposition, "that one organ of sense can never become the substitute for another, so as to excite in the mind the same idea. When an individual is deprived of the organs of sight, no power of attention, or continued effort of the will, or exercise of the other senses, can make him enjoy the class of sensations which is lost. The sense of touch may be increased in an exquisite degree; but, were it true, as has been asserted, that individuals can discover colours by the touch, it could only be by feeling a change upon the surface of the stuff, and not by any perception of the colour. It has been my painful duty to attend on persons who have pretended blindness, and that they could see with their fingers. But I have ever found, that, by a deviation from truth in the first instance, they have been entangled in a tissue of deceit; and have at last been forced into admissions which demonstrated their folly and weak inventions." Again:—"Experiment proves, what is suggested by anatomy, that not only the organs of the senses are appropriated to particular classes of sensations, but that the nerves, intermediate between the brain and the outward organs, are respectively capable of receiving no other sensations but such as are adapted to their particular organs."

Now, I have neither inclination, ability, nor interest, to controvert these propositions of Sir Charles Bell; and I am bound to believe that he has fairly stated the results of his experience. But these propositions can have no effect in invalidating the fact I have stated, because the conditions are not the same. The observations of Sir Charles, I presume, apply to the *ordinary* state of existence. But the Animal Magnetists assert

ence completely different from the ordinary life, and the physiological principles, therefore, which are applicable to the one, are totally inapplicable to the other. In the one case, we see the soul and body acting in unison, although we may be incapable of perceiving the link that connects them; in the other, the corporeal functions disappear,

—and I have undertaken to demonstrate—that there is an *extraordinary* state of existence, called—properly or improperly—*Somnambulism*, in which the phenomenon in question, amongst others, is occasionally manifested. They do not allege that one organ of sense ever becomes the substitute for another; but that, in the state alluded to, the corporeal organs sometimes become totally insensible, and that their functions are exercised in some peculiar manner, being apparently transferred to other parts of the system. Should I be fortunate enough to convince Sir Charles Bell of the reality of this fact, we Animal Magnetists would be delighted to have his valuable assistance in enabling us to unravel the mystery, by endeavouring to explain the causes and conditions of these extraordinary phenomena.

Dr Bertrand, who, according to his own expression, regards Animal Magnetism as “a pure chimera,” tells us that he was for a long time sceptical with regard to this fact of the transference of the faculties, even after he had witnessed several examples of it; and the grounds of his scepticism were similar to those of Dr Roget, Sir Charles Bell, and all our eminent physiologists—because, without doing apparent violence to reason, the phenomena could only be explained upon the supposition of chance or deception. Upon a minute investigation of the evidence, however, the Doctor’s scepticism vanished, and no doubt of the reality of the fact remained in his mind.—See BERTRAND, p. 445, &c.

If our own physiologists would lay aside all prejudice, and condescend to a similar investigation, I am satisfied it would lead to a similar result.

and life assumes a character almost entirely spiritual. The one state may be denominated *organic*—the other—*instinctive* life. In the former state, our knowledge is acquired through the instrumentality of certain intermediate organs of sense; in the latter, it appears to be obtained by means of some species of more immediate intuition.\*

In an Appendix to the first edition of this publication, I brought forward abundance of evidence with the view of demonstrating the extraordinary fact of the occasional transference of the faculties in certain states of the organism. While engaged

\* In their state of *clairvoyance*, the magnetic patients may be said to *feel*, rather than to *see*. Fischer's somnambulist assured him that he saw his internal parts, but not as with the eyes; but he could not describe the manner in which he perceived them. Frederic Hufeland's patient said, only in the highest degree of lucidity, "*I see*;" at other times, she generally used the expression, "*I feel*" this or that part, this or that change, &c. Gmelin's patient, too, said she did not *see*, but *feel*, and with great delicacy, both internally and externally; and Scherb's patient declared, that, in the magnetic sleep, the sensations were rather those of *feeling* than of *sight*; and that the feeling, during that state, was much more acute and delicate than when awake.—See KLUGE, pp. 283, 284.

A corroboration of these views may also be derived from the following curious declaration of Dr Despine's cataleptic patient. "You think," said she to those who had placed themselves *en rapport* with her, "that I don't know what passes around me every evening; but you are mistaken. I see nothing, but I *feel* something which makes an impression upon me, but which I cannot explain."—See BERTRAND, p. 461, *Note*.

in collecting that evidence, I found no want, but rather a redundancy of materials. I found myself to be very much in the same situation with the ingenious Frenchman, who complained of the *embarras de richesses*; and might, with some justice, have exclaimed, in the words of the poet, *Inopem me copia fecit*; I am poor in the midst of abundance. For this reason, I conceived it sufficient to adduce only the most striking and best authenticated instances; omitting all such as did not bear so directly upon the point at issue, as had not been so carefully and so minutely observed, or did not rest upon equally good authority.

I have occasion to know, that the evidence then brought forward was considered pretty conclusive as to the fact, by many persons in every respect well qualified to appreciate its force; although I am aware that the whole subject—like every thing else relating to Animal Magnetism—has been treated with levity and ridicule by many others, equally ignorant, incredulous, and incompetent. Some time subsequent to the publication alluded to, however, I remembered that, several years before, I had, for a totally different purpose, made a pretty ample collection of the most interesting and best authenticated instances of the natural Somnambulism; and it occurred to me that it might be of use to search for and examine this collection, with

a view to discover whether it contained any thing that could confer additional strength upon the cogent evidence already adduced in support of the reality of the very curious facts of which I had endeavoured to demonstrate the occasional manifestation. Having succeeded in my search, I was a good deal surprised, though pleased, to find that, in almost every one of these cases, the facts of the insensibility of the corporeal organs, and of the transference of the faculties, had been more or less distinctly observed. I have since been enabled to add several very interesting recent cases of a perfectly uniform character, almost all of which have been reported with great accuracy by professional men. The discovery of the manifestation of the remarkable phenomena in question appears to have been almost always made by mere accident—they are seldom brought very prominently forward—and scarcely any attempt is made to account for them, excepting upon the strange and inadmissible hypothesis, that the organ of one sense supplies the place and performs the functions of others. Such an hypothesis, indeed,—if otherwise admissible—even did it meet the facts, which it evidently does not, is quite as mysterious and incomprehensible as that of the actual transference of the faculties to different parts of the nervous system, besides being

incapable, like the latter, of affording an adequate explanation of the phenomena.

I am, therefore, about to draw my readers aside from Animal Magnetism for a short while, for the purpose of laying before them a variety of instances of the natural Somnambulism; from which, I think, it will fully appear, that the phenomena which have excited so much incredulity, and even ridicule, are by no means peculiar to the magnetic treatment, nor the mere inventions of individuals professing, and anxious to establish, a peculiar system of doctrines, but have been frequently known to occur spontaneously, in certain abnormal states of the organism.

## CHAPTER XV.

SOMNAMBULISM appears to have been known to the ancients, and has been noticed by Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen, and others. It is only in the works of modern authors, however, that we find minute and accurate descriptions of its phenomena.

Van Helmont tells us, that, when at college, he slept in the same room with one of his comrades, who was subject to somnambulism. He rose during the night, took the key of the garden, went and walked in places where he ran the risk of falling; then returned and replaced the key in a press, as he would have done when awake in broad daylight. One evening, Van Helmont got possession of the key, without being perceived by his comrade, and carefully concealed it; but as soon as the other became somnambulist, he went to seek it in the place where it had been hid, and took it without hesitation, as if he had placed it there himself.\*

\* Van Helmont, *De ortu Formarum*, sect. 52.



Horstius, in his well known work, relates, that a young nobleman in the citadel of Brenstein was observed by his brother, who occupied the same room, to rise in his sleep, put on his cloak, and having opened the casement, to mount, by the help of a pulley, to the roof of the building. There he was seen to tear in pieces a magpie's nest, and wrap the young birds in his cloak. He returned to his apartment, and went to bed, having placed his cloak by him with the birds in it. In the morning he awoke, and related the adventure as having occurred in a dream, and was greatly surprised when he was led to the roof of the tower and shewn the remains of the nest, as well as the magpies concealed in his cloak. This individual would appear to have been in a state of imperfect somnambulism, otherwise he would have recollected nothing of the circumstances when he awoke.

Henricus ab Heer mentions the case of a student at a German university, who, having been very intent on the composition of some verses, which he could not complete to his satisfaction, rose in his sleep, and opening his desk, sat down with great earnestness to renew his attempt. At length, having succeeded, he returned to bed, after reciting his composition aloud, and setting his papers in order as before.\*

\* The author recollects a circumstance somewhat similar,

Several interesting cases of somnambulism will be found in Muratori's work, *Della forza della Fantasia Humana*, some of them given on the authority of Gassendi. One of Gassendi's somnambulists used to rise and dress himself in his sleep, go down to the cellar and draw wine from a cask : *he appeared to see in the dark as well as in a clear day ; but when he awoke either in the street or cellar, he was obliged to grope and feel his way back to his bed. He always answered his wife as if awake, but in the morning recollected nothing of what had passed.* Another sleep-walker, a countryman of Gassendi's, passed on stilts over a swollen torrent in the night, but on awaking was afraid to return before daylight, or until the water had subsided.

The same author, on the authority of an eyewitness, Vigneul de Marville, gives the following account of the somnambulism of an Italian nobleman, Signor Augustin Forari :

“ About midnight, Signor Augustin drew aside the bed-curtains with violence, arose, and put on

which occurred to himself when a boy at the Grammar School. At night, he had made many unsuccessful attempts to translate a difficult passage in Juvenal, and afterwards went to bed. On getting up in the morning, it occurred to him that he had received some light upon the subject during his sleep ; and, upon referring to the passage which had previously puzzled him, he found that he then understood it perfectly well. Upon other occasions, he had been known to get out of bed and walk in his sleep.

his clothes. *I went up to him, and held the light under his eyes. He took no notice of it, although his eyes were open and staring.* Before he put on his hat, he fastened on his sword-belt, which hung on the bed-post: the sword had been removed. Signor Augustin then went in and out of several rooms, approached the fire, warmed himself in an arm-chair, and went thence into a closet, where was his wardrobe. He sought something in it, put the things into disorder, and having set them right again, locked the door and put the key into his pocket. He went to the door of the chamber, opened it, and stepped out on the staircase. He appeared to be sensible to noises, and became frightened. He went into a large court and to the stable, stroked his horse, bridled it, and looked for the saddle to put on it. As he did not find it in the accustomed place, he appeared confused. He then mounted his horse, and galloped to the house-door. He found this shut; dismounted, and knocked with a stone, which he picked up, several times at the door. He afterwards remounted, and conducted his horse to the watering-place, let him drink, tied him to a post, and went quietly to the house. Upon hearing a noise which the servants made in the kitchen, he listened attentively, went to the door, and held his ear to the key-hole. After some time, he went to the other side, and into

a parlour in which was a billiard-table. He walked round it several times, and acted the motions of a player. He then went to a harpsichord on which he was accustomed to practise, and played a few irregular airs. After having moved about for two hours, he went to his room, and threw himself upon his bed, clothed as he was, and the next morning we found him in the same state ; for as often as his attack came on, he slept afterwards from eight to ten hours. The servants declared that they could only put an end to his paroxysms either by tickling him under the soles of his feet, or by blowing a trumpet in his ears."

Dr Prichard takes notice of a man who rose in his sleep, saddled his horse, and rode to a market-place, which he was accustomed to attend once a-week, *being all the time asleep*. Martinet speaks of a saddler who was accustomed to rise in his sleep, and work at his trade. The same author describes the case of a watchmaker's apprentice, who had an attack of somnambulism every fortnight. In this state, *although insensible to all external impressions*, he performed his work with his usual accuracy, and was always astonished, when he awoke, at the progress he had made since the commencement of the paroxysm. An American farmer mentioned by Professor Upham, rose in his sleep, went

to his barn, and threshed out; *in the dark*, five bushels of rye, separating the grain from the straw with the greatest correctness.

“ A young man named Johnis, who works at Cardrew, near Redruth, being asleep in the sump-house of that mine, was observed by two boys to rise and walk to the door, against which he leaned; shortly after, quitting that position, he walked to the engine-shaft, and safely descended to the depth of twenty fathoms, where he was found by his comrades soon after, with his back resting on the ladder. They called to him, to apprize him of the perilous situation in which he was, but he did not hear them, and they were obliged to shake him roughly till he awoke, when he appeared totally at a loss to account for his being so situated.”\*

Dr Gall takes notice of a miller who was in the habit of getting up every night, and attending to his usual avocations at the mill, then returning to bed: *on awakening in the morning, he recollected nothing of what had passed during the night.* Dr Blacklock on one occasion rose from bed, to which he had retired at an early hour, came into the room where his family were assembled, conversed with them, and afterwards entertained them with a pleasant song, without any of them suspecting he was asleep, *and without his retaining*

\* MACNISH, *Philosophy of Sleep*, 2d edit. p. 166.

*after he awoke the least recollection of what he had done.\**

A very curious circumstance is related in the memoirs of that eminent philosopher Dr Franklin. "I went out," said the Doctor, "to bathe in Merton's salt-water hot-bath in Southampton, and, floating on my back, fell asleep, and slept nearly an hour by my watch, without sinking or turning—a thing I never did before, and should hardly have thought possible."

"A case still more extraordinary occurred some time ago in one of the towns on the coast of Ireland. About two o'clock in the morning, the watchmen on the Revenue Quay were much surprised at descrying a man disporting himself in the water, about a hundred yards from the shore. Intimation having been given to the Revenue boat's crew, they pushed off, and succeeded in picking him up; but, strange to say, he had no idea whatever of his perilous situation, and it was with the utmost difficulty they could persuade him he was not still in bed. But the most singular part of this novel adventure, and which was afterwards ascertained, was, that the man had left his house at twelve o'clock that night, and walked through a difficult, and, to him, dangerous road, a distance of nearly two miles, and had actually swam one

\* MACNISH, p. 169.

mile and a half, when he was fortunately discovered and picked up.

“ Not very long ago, a boy was seen fishing off Brest, up to the middle in water. On coming up to him, he was found to be fast asleep.”\*

The story of Lord Culpepper's brother is pretty well known. In 1686, he was indicted at the Old Bailey for shooting one of the Guards and his horse. He pleaded somnambulism, and was acquitted, on producing ample evidence of the extraordinary things he did in his sleep. There is a somewhat similar story of a French gentleman, who rose in his sleep, crossed the Seine, fought a duel, and killed his antagonist, without recollecting any of the circumstances when awake.

The following curious case occurred not long ago at the Town-Hall, Southwark :—“ Yesterday Mary Spencer, a well-looking young woman, was placed at the bar, before Mr Alderman Thorp, charged with possessing herself of a pair of trousers and a handkerchief, under the following most extraordinary circumstances :

“ John Green deposed, he was by trade a plasterer, and, on Saturday evening, after finishing his work, he went to see some friends at Pimlico, and returned from thence about ten o'clock, and in passing through the Borough, he was accosted

\* MACNISH, pp. 167, 168.

by a female: he had at the time a bundle on his arm. He knew no more of what transpired until between one and two o'clock on Sunday morning.

“Alderman Thorp.—What! were you so drunk that you cannot tell what happened?

“Complainant (with great simplicity),—I was not drunk, your worship; I was fast asleep (*laugh-ter.*)

“Alderman Thorp.—You cannot be serious. I never heard of such a thing as a man walking through a crowded thoroughfare, like the Borough High Street, without being disturbed.

“Complainant.—What I have stated, your worship, is true; I am, unfortunately, too frequently affected with fits of somnambulism, and, for greater security from robbery, I always make what articles I carry fast to my arm, so that if any one attempt to snatch it from me it would awaken me.

“Alderman Thorp.—But how do you know the prisoner is the party who accosted you in the Borough? If you were asleep, you could not see her.

“Complainant.—Strange as it may appear, although I have not the power to arouse myself when in such a state of excessive lethargy, yet I can retain the sound of persons' voices in my mind, and, from the voice of the prisoner, I have not the least doubt she is the party.



“ Alderman Thorp.—How do you account for the lapse of hours from being accosted by the prisoner up to the time you discovered your loss ?

“ Complainant.—I am in the habit of walking for hours in my sleep, and if an attempt had been made to forcibly take the bundle from my arm, it would have aroused me ; my handkerchief was cut, and thus the bundle was easily taken away.

“ Alderman Thorp.—I never heard such a case before ; was the bundle found ?

“ Acting Inspector McCraw, division M. answered in the affirmative, and added, that what the complainant had stated about walking the streets and roads was true : he had made inquiries, and found it to be the fact ; it was well known to the police.

“ Watts, police constable 163, division M. deposed, that the complainant came to the station-house between one and two o'clock on Sunday morning, and made precisely the same statement as he had made before the Alderman. The Inspector thought the tale savoured of the marvelous, and told witness to accompany him (complainant) in search of the property ; and on arriving at a house in Kent Street, Borough, he said he thought the bundle was there. He knocked at the door, which was opened, and, by the door of a room wherein the prisoner was sleeping, the pro-

party was found: the moment she spoke, he said the prisoner was the person who stopped him in the Borough. Witness took the prisoner to the station-house.

“ The prosecutor here pointed out the way in which the bundle must have been taken away, and showed the Alderman the rent handkerchief.

“ Mr Edmonds (for the prisoner) contended, that no jury would convict upon the evidence of a sleep-walker, in a prosecution against a street-walker (*a laugh.*) The prisoner laid no claim to the bundle; and as the complainant had sworn it was his property, the police would give it up to him.

“ Alderman Thorp said it was so strange a case, that he hardly knew how to act: he should, however, under the doubtful circumstances as to identity, give the prisoner the benefit of it, and discharge her. The bundle was given up to the complainant.

“ A gentleman, who was in attendance, said he had known the complainant many years, and it was not an uncommon thing for him to be seized with that unhappy affliction while at work on the scaffold, and yet he had never met with an accident, and, while in that state, would answer questions put to him as though he was awake.”

Mr Macnish, in his ingenious work already re-

ferred to, very correctly observes, that " to walk on the house top, to scale precipices, and descend to the bottom of frightful ravines, are common exploits with the somnambulist; and he performs them with a facility far beyond the power of any man who is completely awake."

Equally judicious are the following observations of the same learned writer: " It is not always safe to arouse a sleep-walker; and many cases of the fatal effects thence arising have been detailed by authors." " Among other examples, that of a young lady, who was addicted to this affection, may be mentioned. Knowing her failing, her friends made a point of locking the door, and securing the window of her chamber, in such a manner that she could not possibly get out. One night, these precautions were unfortunately overlooked, and, in a paroxysm of somnambulism, she walked into the garden behind the house. While there, she was recognised by some of the family, who were warned by the noise she made on opening the door, and they followed and awoke her; but such was the effect produced upon her nervous system, that she almost instantly expired."

A very affecting incident, of a similar description, occurred about twelve or eighteen months ago at Dresden. One evening, a young lady was observed walking upon the top of a house in one

of the streets of that city. The alarm was given, and a considerable concourse of persons assembled, intensely interested in the event of her perilous proceeding. Every possible precaution was taken to prevent her from receiving injury, in case of an anticipated fall;—the street having been covered with beds, matrasses, &c. Meanwhile, the young lady, apparently unconscious of danger, came forward to the edge of the roof, smiling and bowing to the multitude below, and occasionally arranging her hair and her dress. After this scene had continued for some time, and the spectators were in the utmost anxiety for her safety, she at length proceeded towards the window of a room, from which she had made her exit. In their alarm, some of the family had placed a light in this room, which the somnambulist perceiving, suddenly awoke, fell to the ground, and was killed on the spot.

The preceding instances, I presume, sufficiently illustrate the more common phenomena of somnambulism—the expertness, confidence, and security with which somnambulists perform the most difficult and dangerous operations—the organic insensibility attending the affection, and the complete oblivion, when awake, of every thing that may have occurred during the paroxysm—and

the danger of arousing them out of their extraordinary sleep. In the following instances, similar phenomena will be found to occur, along with others of a still more remarkable character.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE following case of somnambulism is reported in the 38th volume of the French Encyclopædia, on the highly respectable authority of the Archbishop of Bourdeaux, and has been frequently copied into other subsequent publications.

It is the case of a young ecclesiastic, who was in the habit of getting up during the night, in a state of somnambulism, of going to his room, taking pen, ink, and paper, and composing and writing sermons. When he had finished one page of the paper on which he was writing, he would read over what he had written aloud, and correct it. Upon one occasion, he had made use of the expression: *Ce divin enfant*. In reading over the passage, he changed the word *divin* into *adorable*. Observing, however, that the pronoun *ce* could not stand before the word *adorable*, he added to it the letter *t*.

In order to ascertain whether the somnambulist made any use of his eyes, the Archbishop held a piece of pasteboard under his chin, to prevent him from seeing the paper upon which he was writing ;

but he continued to write on, without being, apparently, incommoded in the slightest degree. The paper upon which he was writing was taken away, and other paper laid before him; but the young ecclesiastic immediately perceived the change.

He wrote pieces of music while in this state, and in the same manner, *with his eyes closed*.\* The words were placed under the music. It happened, upon one occasion, that the words were written in too large a character, and did not stand exactly under the corresponding notes. He soon perceived the error, blotted out the part, and wrote it over again with great exactness.

Now, in what manner, it may be asked, was the faculty of vision exercised by this somnambulist? He wrote, it will be observed, and corrected what he had written, with his eyes closed; and he experienced no inconvenience when an opaque body was interposed between them and the paper on which

\* I request the particular attention of my readers to this remarkable phenomenon throughout all the instances of the natural somnambulism which I shall have occasion to adduce. I am aware that, in my views upon this subject, I am opposed by all the most eminent adherents of the prevailing systems of physiology; but I beg it may be noted that, while they deny the *possibility* of the phenomenon, *a priori*, upon mere theoretical grounds, I have undertaken to demonstrate its real *existence* by positive evidence of the most cogent and irresistible nature. The explanation of the fact is attended with more difficulty; but this circumstance affords no argument against its reality.

he was writing. Is it not evident here that the faculty in question must have been transferred from its appropriate organ to some other part of the nervous system?

In the following case, which appears to have been most minutely and most accurately observed, the phenomenon of the exercise of vision without the use of the eyes, and, consequently, of the transference of the faculty of sight, is still more conspicuous.

Some interesting particulars, concerning a natural somnambulist, having been communicated to the Philosophical Society of Lausanne, three of its members—Dr Levade, and Messrs Regnier and Van Berchem—were appointed a committee to make their observations and report upon the case. The somnambulist was a boy of the name of Devaud, thirteen years and six months old, residing in the house of M. Tardent, schoolmaster at Vevey.

The following are some of the facts observed and reported by the Committee upon this occasion. I have purposely left out of view the theoretical principles upon which these intelligent gentlemen attempted to account for the phenomena they observed; being anxious, at present, to confine myself, as much as possible, to the mere detail of facts.\*

\* I have quoted from a translation of the French Report,



“ We can testify,” say the Committee, “ that he dressed himself in a room perfectly dark. His clothes lay on a great table ; and when we jumbled them with other wearing apparel, he immediately discovered the trick, and complained grievously that his companions made sport of him. At last, by the help of a feeble ray, we saw him dress with great precision.”

“ Having snatched one of his books, *when his eyes were perfectly shut*, he said, without opening it, ‘ ’Tis a sorry dictionary,’ as indeed it was.”

With his eyes fast locked, he touched, in our presence, several objects, and yet distinguished perfectly well those he had, from those he had not seen before. Once, for example, we thrust into the drawer that contained his papers, a book which did not belong to him. He stumbled upon it by accident, and expressed great concern lest he should be suspected of theft.”

“ *He is sometimes apprised of the presence of objects, without being assisted by the sense of sight or of touch.*”

“ Having prevailed on him to write a version, we saw him light a candle, take pen, ink and paper from his drawer, and then jot down what his master

published at Edinburgh, in 1792. An account of this case will be found also in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Art. SLEEP-WALKER.

dictated. *Though we put a thick piece of paper before his eyes, he continued to form each character with the same distinctness as before ; only he seemed to feel uneasy, probably from the paper being placed too near his nose, and so preventing a free respiration."*

At five o'clock, on the morning of the 21st December, our young sleep-walker rose from his bed, took his writing materials and version book, and put his pen to the top of the page, but observing some lines already traced, he brought it down to the blank part of the leaf. The lesson began with these words, *Fiant ignavi pigritia—Ils deviennent ignorans par la paresse.* What is very surprising, after writing several lines, he perceived that he had omitted an *s* in the word *ignorans*, and inserted two *rs* in *paresse* ; nor did he proceed further till he corrected both these mistakes."

"At another time, he wrote a copy, to please his master, as he said. It exhibited specimens of large and round text, and running hand, each done with its respective pen. He drew a castle in the corner of the paper, and erased a blot between two letters, without touching either of them. M. Levade, in short, has seen him cypher and calculate with great exactness. *In each of the above operations, the sleep-walker had his eyes almost always shut, but there was a light in the room."*

*“ We have often heard him come down stairs very hastily, when it was quite dark.”*

“ We shewed him a book he had never seen before. He said he would examine it in day-light ; and retiring, with this intention, into a very dark kitchen, opened the book,” &c.

“ He took from his press several of his own books, went to examine them in total darkness, cast up the title-pages, and named each, without making a single mistake, as we verified by bringing them into the light, as soon as he named them. *He has even told the title of a book, when there was a thick plank placed between it and his eyes.*”

*“ M. Tardent shewed us a specimen of his writing, which, he assured us, the sleep-walker had executed in the completest darkness.”*

In their observations upon this remarkable case, the Committee conclude, that *“ since the sleep-walker can write with any thing placed before his eyes, we are not to be surprised that he should do so in the greatest obscurity.* In darkness, it seems that his sense of touch supplies, in some measure, that of sight ; *that his hands, and even his face (for he has been seen to approach objects so near his face as to touch it), help him out with a just idea of the forms and qualities of objects.”*

The reader is requested to compare this last observation with the phenomena described in the Ap-

pendix (No. II.), as occurring in the cases reported by the Doctors Despine and Delpit, and by Professor Kieser, which, I have been informed, have been the subject of a great deal of wit and ridicule. In these various instances of the observation of a very extraordinary fact, it is quite impossible that there could have been any thing like collusion between the parties; nor is there the slightest ground to suspect the competency, or the good faith, of the reporters. Had the appropriate experiments been made in this Lausanne case, the results, in all probability, would have been very similar to those observed and recorded by the learned Professor.

I may here remark, that the hypothesis of one sense supplying the want of another, as I formerly hinted, is utterly inadequate to explain the facts, and therefore quite inadmissible. In some of the cases to be afterwards adduced, it will be seen that *the whole of the senses* were in a state of temporary suspension; so that not one of them was left to perform the functions of the others, even if such an hypothesis were otherwise tenable. On the other hand, the supposition of the transference of the faculties, which apparently takes place during the apathy of the organs, combined with an increased sensibility and activity of certain portions of the nervous system, which has been observed to take

place in various instances, is much more consistent with the phenomena actually manifested, and renders the solution of all difficulties comparatively easy. At all events, explain it as we will, the fact itself is capable of being demonstrated by evidence.

The next instance of the natural somnambulism to which I shall refer, rests upon the most respectable authority of the Aulic Councillor and Professor Feder of Goettingen, a gentleman whose learning and philosophical talents were highly appreciated in his native country.

The subject of the Professor's observations was a student, who, during a severe nervous complaint, experienced several attacks of somnambulism. Upon these occasions, he would go from his bed-room to his parlour, and back, open and shut the doors, as also his closets, and take out of the latter whatever he wanted—pieces of music, pen, ink, and paper, &c.—*and all this with his eyes shut.* From among his music, he picked out a march from the Medea, laid the sheet in a proper situation before him, and having found the appropriate key, he played the whole piece, with his usual skill, upon the harpsichord. In the same manner, he also played one of Bach's sonatas, and gave the most expressive passages with surprising effect. One of the persons present turned the notes upside down: This he immediately perceived, and when he again

began to play, he replaced the sheet in its proper situation. While playing, he remarked a string out of tune, upon which he stopt, put it in order, and then proceeded. He wrote a letter to his brother; and what he wrote was not only perfectly rational, but straight and legible. While Professor Feder was upon a visit to him one afternoon, he observed that it was snowing, which was really the case. On the same day, he remarked, *notwithstanding his eyes were closed*, that the landlord of the opposite house was standing at the window, which was true; and that hats were hanging at the window of another room in the same house, which was also correct, &c. No particular experiments appear to have been made, in this case, with the view of ascertaining the precise state of the different faculties; but it was quite evident that this somnambulist saw distinctly without the use of his eyes.\*

The following case of natural somnambulism is recorded in the Transactions of the Medical Society of Breslau.†

A rope-maker, twenty-three years of age, was frequently overtaken by sleep, even by day-light,

\* I have mislaid my reference to the source whence I derived this case; but I believe it will be found in Moritz's *Psychological Magazine*.

† See *Acta Vratislav.* Class iv. art. 7.

and in the midst of his usual occupation, whether sitting, standing, or walking. *His eyes were firmly closed, and he lost the use of all his external senses.* While in this state, he sometimes recommenced doing all that he had been engaged in during the previous part of the day, from his morning devotions up to the commencement of the paroxysm. At other times, he would continue the work in which he happened to be engaged at the time, and finished his business with as great ease and success as when awake. When the fit overtook him in travelling, he did not stand still, but proceeded on his journey, with the same facility and almost faster than when awake, without missing the road, or stumbling over any thing. In this manner, he repeatedly went from Naumburgh to Weimar. Upon one of these occasions, he came into a narrow lane, across which there lay some timber: He passed over it regularly, as if awake, without injury. With equal care and dexterity, he avoided the horses and carriages which came in his way. At another time, he was overtaken by sleep, a short while before setting out for Weimar on horseback. He rode through the river Ilme, allowed his horse to drink, and drew up his legs to prevent them from getting wet; then passed through several streets, crossed the market-place, which was then

full of people, booths, and carts; and arrived in safety at the house where his business lay.

*During the continuance of the paroxysm, he was quite insensible; though pricked, pinched, or struck, he felt nothing. He could not see when his eyes were forced open. He could not smell even the most volatile spirit; nor could he hear the report of a pistol, when fired close beside him.*

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the ordinary material principles of Physiology are quite incapable of explaining such a case as this. Here, it is at once obvious, there is no foundation for the hypothesis of one sense supplying the place of another; because *all* the external senses were ascertained to be completely dormant. The case, it is conceived, can only be accounted for by assuming, as warranted by the facts, a transference of the faculties; and that the internal sense—the soul—manifested its energies through other than the usual organs.

Dr Knoll gives a curious account of a somnambulist, whom he himself attentively and accurately observed during his nightly wanderings in winter; and his narrative is accompanied with many judicious and interesting remarks.\* The subject of

\* *Historische, theoretische und practische Betrachtung eines kürzlich vorgefallenen Nachtwandels.* 1747.



these observations was a young man, a gardener, who became somnambulist, and, while in that state, performed many extraordinary operations, of which I shall notice only the following.

The lady of the house in which he resided, being apprehensive of some danger from his nocturnal excursions, ordered him to sleep in another apartment, where he was locked up and watched. When he became somnambulist, at the usual hour, he began to perform all sorts of operations upon his clothes and the furniture of the room. He climbed up to the window, and from thence to a stove, which was much higher, and at some distance from it, and rode upon the latter, as if upon horseback. The height of the stove, its distance from the window, and its small breadth, were such, that a person awake would scarcely have ventured to go through these operations. After descending from the stove, he knocked a large table about, hither and thither, and finding that it was likely to fall upon himself, he very dexterously contrived to evade it. He gathered all the clothes he could find in the room, mixed them together, then separated them carefully, and hung them up, each article in its proper place. The old stockings and shoes he endeavoured to arrange together in pairs, according to their shape and colour, as if he actually saw them. He laid hold of a needle, which he

had stuck into the wall some weeks before, put the thread through the eye, and sewed his small-clothes. Besides these, he performed a variety of other operations too tedious to enumerate; *all, however, requiring light and the use of the eyes, with which, it would appear, he was enabled to dispense.*

In this case, we have an example of the ease and confidence with which the somnambulist performs difficult and delicate operations, without any assistance from the sensitive organs. In some of the following instances, these and other remarkable phenomena will be still more conspicuously displayed.

## CHAPTER XVII.

I AM now about to adduce two or three cases of somnambulism, in which the affection appears to have been occasioned by, or at least was concomitant with, an otherwise morbid state of the system. In these, it will be seen, the phenomena were, in all respects, analogous to those manifested in the preceding instances.

The following case is given upon the authority of M. Sauvages de la Croix.

A girl of twenty years of age was frequently attacked with cataleptic insensibility, during which she continued stiff and deprived of all sensation, whether standing, sitting, or lying, in the position she might happen to be in at the commencement of the attack, and she could be pushed forward, like a statue, when it was wished to remove her from one place to another. She was afterwards placed in a different state, which commenced with the same deprivation of sense and motion, but, at intervals, presented a wonderful kind of animation. She first became motionless, then, some minutes

afterwards, she began to yawn, sat up on the bed, and enacted the following scene, which she repeated at least fifty times. She spoke with an unusual liveliness and cheerfulness, and what she said was a continuation of what she had spoken in her previous fit, or a repetition of some part of the catechism, which she had heard read on the preceding evening. She frequently addressed her acquaintances in the house, and sometimes made ironical applications of moral apophthegms to them under feigned names, with open eyes, and such gestures as she had made the previous evening. *That during all this time she was not awake, is clear from various experiments. A hand was suddenly passed near her eyes, without producing any motion in the eye-lids, or any attempt to evade it, or interrupting her speech in the slightest degree. The same thing happened when a finger was suddenly approached close to her eye, or a burning taper held so near to it, that the hair of her eye-lids was actually burnt, and also when any one called loudly into her ear from behind, or threw a stone against the bedstead. Nay more, brandy and spirit of hartshorn were poured into her eyes and mouth; Spanish snuff was blown into her nostrils; she was pricked with needles; her fingers were wrenched; the ball of her eye was touched with a feather, and even with the finger: She ma-*

*nifested not the slightest sensation.* She always began to speak with more animation, and, soon afterwards, she sang and laughed aloud, attempted to get out of bed, and at length sprang out of it, and uttered a cry of joy. *She kept the middle way between the bedsteads as well as when awake, and never came against them—turned dexterously round between the bedsteads and a concealed closet, without ever groping her way, or touching the objects; and after turning round, she returned to her bed, covered herself with the clothes, and again became stiff as at the commencement.* She then awoke, as if from a profound sleep, and when she perceived, from the appearance of the bystanders, that she must have had her fits again, she wept the whole day for shame, and never knew what had happened to her during the paroxysm.

This case bears considerable analogy to that of Louisa Baerkmann, reported by Dr Joseph Frank, and noticed in the Appendix (No. II.) It tends, along with others, to demonstrate the total organic insensibility attending the affection, and the complete forgetfulness in the waking state of every thing that occurred during the paroxysm.

Lord Monboddo, in the 11th chapter of the Second book of his *Antient Metaphysics*, has recorded a very curious case of somnambulism, which, although I presume it is very generally known, I

shall take the liberty of again relating in his Lordship's own words.

“ It was,” says his Lordship, “ the case of a young girl, in the neighbourhood of my house in the country, who had a disease that is pretty well known in the country where I live, under the name of the *leaping*, that is the *jumping* ague; and which is no other than a kind of frenzy which seizes the patients in their sleep, and makes them jump and run like persons possessed. The girl was attacked by this disease three years ago, in the spring, when she was about sixteen years of age, and it lasted something more than three months. The fit always seized her in the day-time, commonly about seven or eight o'clock in the morning, after she had been out of bed two or three hours. It began with a heaviness or drowsiness, which ended in sleep, at least what had the appearance of sleep, *for her eyes were close shut*. In this condition, she would leap up upon stools and tables with surprising agility; then she would get out of the cottage where she lived with her father, mother, and brother, and run with great violence, *and much faster than she could do when well*, but always with a certain destination to some one place in the neighbourhood; and to which place she often said, when she found the fit coming upon her, that she was to go; and after she had gone to the place of her

destination, if she did not there awake, she came back in the same direction, though she did not always keep the high road, but frequently went a nearer way across the fields; and though her road, for this reason, was often very rough, she never fell, notwithstanding the violence with which she ran. *But all the while she ran, her eyes were quite shut,* as her brother attests, who often ran with her to take care of her, and who, though he was much older, stronger, and cleverer than she, was hardly able to keep up with her. When she told, before the fit came on, to what place she was to run, she said she dreamt the night before that she was to run to that place; and, though they sometimes dissuaded her from going to a particular place, as to my house, for example, where they said the dogs would bite her, she said she would run that way, and no other. When she awaked, and came out of her delirium, she found herself extremely weak, but soon recovered her strength, and was nothing the worse for it, but, on the contrary, was much the worse for being restrained from running. *When she awaked, and came to herself, she had not the least remembrance of what had passed while she was asleep.* Sometimes she would run upon the top of the earthen fence which surrounded her father's little garden; and, though the fence was of an irregular figure, and very narrow at top, yet

she never fell from it, nor from the top of the house, upon which she would sometimes get, by the assistance of this fence, *though her eyes were then likewise shut*. Some time before her disorder left her, she dreamed, as she said, that the water of a well in the neighbourhood, called the *Dripping Well*, would cure her; and, accordingly, she drank of it very plentifully, both when she was well and when she was ill. Once, when she was ill, she expressed, by signs, a violent desire to drink of it (for she did not, while in the fit, speak so as to be intelligible), and they having brought her other water, she would not let it come near her, but rejected it with signs of great aversion; but when they brought her the water of this well, she drank it greedily, *her eyes being all the while shut*. Before her last fit came upon her, she said that she had just three leaps to make, and she would neither leap nor run more. And accordingly, having fallen asleep as usual, she leaped up upon the stone at the back of the chimney, and down again; and having done this three times, she kept her word, and never leaped nor run more. She is now in perfect health."

Having given these details of this very interesting case, his Lordship justly observes: "What I have said of this girl remembering nothing of what passed while she was in the fit, is the case of all



night-walkers. It is by this, chiefly, that night-walking is distinguished from dreaming; and it proves to me, that the mind is then more disengaged from the body than it is even in dreaming. For it is not only without the use of the senses, but without memory." So far his Lordship.

Here, then, is a case of natural somnambulism, in which we find several of the phenomena peculiar to the affection, and which have occurred in many other instances, very distinctly developed. With her eyes shut, this girl runs rapidly along the high-road, and through the fields, uninjured. She runs with greater rapidity than she was capable of doing in her ordinary state. She also runs securely upon the narrow and irregular top of an earthen-fence, and upon the top of the house, with her eyes still closed. In the same state, she distinguishes between the water of a particular well and other water. When awake, she remembers nothing of what occurred during her fits; and she predicts the period and the manner of her recovery.

The following account was communicated to Dr Wienholt by Dr Schultz of Hamburgh, and it is also inserted in Meiner's collection, he having received it from the same source.

The patient was a girl of thirteen, belonging to a respectable family, who was sick of a severe ner-

vous complaint, accompanied with violent convulsive motions, insensibility and catalepsy. In some of her attacks, she conversed with much acuteness and pointed wit. While in a state of somnambulism, she distinguished, without difficulty, all colours presented to her, and recognised the numbers of cards, and the stripes upon the painted cards. She described the colour of the binding of books. She wrote as well as usual, and cut out figures in paper, as she was accustomed to do for amusement in her waking state. *During all this time, her eyes were fast closed; but in order to be certain, that, upon these occasions, she made no use of her eyes, they were bandaged upon the approach of the convulsions which preceded the somnambulism.*

I need make no remark upon this case, excepting that it confirms and corroborates some of the most remarkable phenomena described in the preceding instances.

One of the most extraordinary somnambulists upon record is a certain John Baptist Negretti of Vicenza, a servant in the family of the Marquis Louis Sale. Messrs Righlini and Pignatti particularly observed the phenomena he exhibited; and the latter, in the year 1745, drew up a Report upon the case, of which the substance will be found in the *Journal Encyclopedique* for the month of

July 1762, and also in the work of Muratori already referred to, page 96, and in the *Journal Etranger* for the year 1756.

I must refer the inquisitive reader to some one of the above-mentioned works for a full account of this very curious and amusing case; and shall only advert to one or two particulars, as illustrative of the state of this somnambulist's sensibility.

Upon one occasion, Negretti dressed a salad, having previously taken all that was necessary for this purpose out of the kitchen-press; and when it was ready, he sat down at a table to eat it. The plate was taken away from before him, and a dish of cabbage set down in its place, which he ate instead of the salad. While he was still eating, the cabbage was removed, and a tart placed before him, which he also devoured, without appearing to perceive any difference in the things he was eating; from which circumstance, the reporters observe, it may be inferred, that the usual organs of taste were inactive or insensible, and that the soul only was busy, without any co-operation of the body.

A similar inference may be drawn from the following occurrence:—At another time, he said that he wished to drink a little. Accordingly, he went to a tavern, called the landlord, and asked for half a pint of wine. Instead of wine, half a pint of water

was given him, which he drank off. Upon returning home to the chateau, he appeared very cheerful, said that he had been drinking in the tavern, and that his stomach was much the better of it.\*

In Moritz's *Psychological Magazine* (vol. ii. No. 1, p. 69), there is a short account, by Ritter, of a boy of ten years of age, who became subject to fits of drowsiness, and frequently fell asleep suddenly, even in the day-time, whether sitting or standing. In this state, he would converse with the persons present; *and although his eyes were, to all appearance, completely closed, he was able to see and discriminate all objects presented to him.* When awakened, he recollected nothing of what had occurred during his sleep, but would talk of other matters. On his again falling asleep, the thread of discourse could be taken up where it had been previously interrupted, and continued. When he again awoke, he remembered nothing of the conversation that had occurred during his sleep, but recollected what had been last said to him when awake; and thus, says the reporter, it appeared as if he had two souls, one for the state of sleep, and the other for the period when he was awake.

In this and the following case, which presents a still more extraordinary instance of this *double*

\* Similar phenomena are quite familiar to those acquainted with the magnetic somnambulism.

*personality*, we might perhaps find some corroboration of the ideas of Reil and others, respecting the two antagonist poles of sensibility in the human constitution—the *pneumatic* and the *somatic*—the cerebral and the ganglionic systems of vitality.

The case now to be referred to occurred in America. It is described by Major Elliot, Professor of Mathematics in the United States' Military Academy at West Point, and was communicated by Dr Mitchell to Dr Nott, in the *Medical Repository of America*, for January 1816.

The patient was an accomplished young lady, who, in a state of somnambulism, lost all recollection of her previous acquirements, and, like a child, was obliged to commence her education anew. When restored to her natural state, she again became possessed of her former knowledge, but remembered nothing of what had occurred in the interval. During four years, these two states alternated periodically; but she herself possessed as little consciousness of her double character, as two distinct persons of each other.

When treating of somnambulism, Dr Abercrombie observes, that “another very singular phenomenon presented by some instances of this affection, is what has been called, rather incorrectly, a state of *double consciousness*. It consists in the individual recollecting, during a paroxysm, circum-

stances which occurred in a former attack, though there was no remembrance of them during the interval. This, as well as various other phenomena connected with the affection, is strikingly illustrated in a case described by Dr Dyce of Aberdeen, in the Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions. The patient was a servant girl, and the affection began with fits of somnolency, which came upon her suddenly during the day, and from which she could at first be roused by shaking, or by being taken out into the open air. She soon began to talk a great deal during the attacks, regarding things which seemed to be passing before her as a dream; and she was not, at this time, sensible of any thing that was said to her.....In her subsequent paroxysms, she began to understand what was said to her, and to answer with a considerable degree of consistency," &c. "She also became capable of following her usual employments during the paroxysm; at one time she laid out the table correctly for breakfast, and repeatedly dressed herself and the children of the family, *her eyes remaining shut the whole time*. The remarkable circumstance was now discovered, that, during the paroxysm, she had a distinct recollection of what took place in former paroxysms, though she had no remembrance of it during the intervals. At one time, she was taken to church while under the attack, and there be-

haved with propriety, evidently attending to the preacher ; and she was at one time so much affected as to shed tears. In the interval, she had no recollection of having been at church ; but, in the next paroxysm, she gave a most distinct account of the sermon, and mentioned particularly the part of it by which she had been so much affected.”—“ During the attack, her eye-lids were generally half-shut ; her eyes sometimes resembled those of a person affected with amaurosis, that is, with a dilated and insensible state of the pupil ; but sometimes they were quite natural.”—“ At one time, during the attack, she read distinctly a portion of a book which was presented to her : and she often sung, both sacred and common pieces, incomparably better, Dr Dyce affirms, than she could do in the waking state.”\*

Dr Abercrombie also relates the following analogous history.

“ A girl aged seven years, an orphan of the lowest rank, residing in the house of a farmer, by whom

\* Abercrombie *On the Intellectual Powers*. Fourth Edition, pp. 294, &c.

It appears that this girl was afterwards abused, in one of her paroxysms, in the most brutal and treacherous manner. *On awaking, she had no consciousness whatever of the outrage ; but in a subsequent paroxysm, some days afterwards, it recurred to her recollection, and she then related to her mother all the revolting particulars.* This case presents a very striking instance of the phenomenon of *double personality*.

she was employed in tending cattle, was accustomed to sleep in an apartment separated by a very thin partition from one which was frequently occupied by an itinerant fiddler. This person was a musician of very considerable skill, and often spent a part of the night in performing pieces of a refined description ; but his performance was not taken notice of by the child except as a disagreeable noise. After a residence of six months in this family, she fell into bad health, and was removed to the house of a benevolent lady, where, on her recovery after a protracted illness, she was employed as a servant. Some years after she came to reside with this lady, the most beautiful music was often heard in the house during the night, which excited no small interest and wonder in the family; and many a waking hour was spent in endeavours to discover the invisible minstrel. At length, the sound was traced to the sleeping room of the girl, who was found fast asleep, but uttering from her lips a sound exactly resembling the sweetest sounds of a small violin. On farther observation it was found, that, after being about two hours in bed, she became restless and began to mutter to herself ;—she then uttered sounds precisely resembling the tuning of a violin, and at length, after some prelude, dashed off into elaborate pieces of music, which she performed in a clear and accurate manner, and with a sound



exactly resembling the most delicate modulations of that instrument. During the performance she sometimes stopped, made the sound of re-tuning her instrument, and then began exactly where she had stopped in the most correct manner."

"After a year or two, her music was not confined to the imitation of the violin, but was often exchanged for that of a piano of a very old description, which she was accustomed to hear in the house where she now lived; and she then also began to sing, imitating exactly the voices of several ladies of the family. In another year from this time, she began to talk a great deal in her sleep, in which she seemed to fancy herself instructing a younger companion. She often descanted with the utmost fluency and correctness on a variety of topics, both political and religious, the news of the day, the historical parts of Scripture, public characters, and particularly the characters of members of the family and their visitors. In these discussions she shewed the most wonderful discrimination, often combined with sarcasm, and astonishing powers of mimicry. Her language through the whole was fluent and correct, and her illustrations often forcible and even eloquent. She was fond of illustrating her subjects by what she called a *fable*, and in these her imagery was both appropriate and elegant. She was by no means, says my infor-

mer, limited in her range,—Bonaparte, Wellington, Blücher, and all the kings of the earth, figured among the phantasmagoria of her brain; and all were animadverted upon with such freedom from restraint, as often made me think poor Nancy had been transported into Madame Genlis' Palace of Truth. The justness and truth of her remarks on all subjects, excited the utmost astonishment in those who were acquainted with her limited means of acquiring information. She has been known to conjugate correctly Latin verbs which she had probably heard in the school-room of the family; and she was once heard to speak several sentences very correctly in French,—at the same time stating that she heard them from a foreign gentleman, whom she had met accidentally in a shop. Being questioned on this subject when awake, she remembered having seen the gentleman, but could not repeat a word of what he said. During her paroxysms, it was almost impossible to awake her, *and when her eyelids were raised, and a candle brought near the eye, the pupil seemed insensible to the light.* For several years, she was, during the paroxysms, entirely unconscious of the presence of other persons; but, about the age of sixteen, she began to observe those who were in the apartment, and she could tell correctly their numbers, though the utmost care was taken to have the room darkened. She now also

became capable of answering questions that were put to her, and of noticing remarks made in her presence; and, with regard to both, she shewed astonishing acuteness. Her observations, indeed, were often of such a nature, and corresponded so accurately with characters and events, that by the country people she was believed to be endowed with supernatural powers.

“ During the whole period of this remarkable affection, which seems to have gone on for ten or eleven years, she was, when awake, a dull awkward girl, very slow in receiving any kind of instruction, though much care was bestowed upon her; and, in point of intellect, she was much inferior to the other servants of the family. In particular, she shewed no kind of turn for music. She did not appear to have any recollection of what had passed during her sleep; but, during her nocturnal ramblings, she was more than once heard to lament her infirmity of speaking in her sleep, adding, how fortunate it was that she did not sleep among the other servants, as they teased her enough about it as it was.”\*

\* Abercrombie, *ut sup.* pp. 296, &c.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

IN some of the preceding cases, it must have been observed, the peculiar phenomena of somnambulism, although, upon the whole, of a pretty uniform character, are more distinctly manifested than in others. Sometimes, too, only one or two of these phenomena are developed, while the others do not appear at all, or are only slightly noticed. These peculiarities may arise from the degree in which the patient is affected, from the opportunities afforded for experiment and observation, and from the knowledge and tact of the observers. But from the circumstance that a particular phenomenon has not been noticed in any one case, we are not entitled to conclude that it might not have been developed, had proper means been employed to ascertain its existence. It is only of late that professional men have obtained any thing approaching to an adequate knowledge of the nature of this affection, and of the best means of investigating the

phenomena it presents. Previously, only such appearances were, in general, observed, as might happen to be accidentally manifested.

The readers of the former edition of this publication may remember that, in the Appendix (now No. II.), there was inserted, amongst others, a short account of a case of Catalepsy, which occurred in the hospital *Della Vita*, at Bologna. The following very remarkable case of spontaneous catalepsy and ecstasy combined, was also observed, at the same place, by MM. Carini and J. Visconti, and by M. Mazzacorati. I extract the interesting account given of this case in the LANCET for 1832-33 (vol. xxiii. pp. 668, &c.)

The patient was a female of twenty-five years of age. I shall omit the medical description given of the morbid symptoms, and proceed, at once, to notice the phenomena which were manifested.

The body was altogether insensible even to the most intense and painful physical impressions. *During the first twenty-one days, the eyes were completely shut. In the second period of the disease, she opened them, but she kept them motionless, turned towards the light, and insensible to all the impressions sought to be communicated to them.* M. Mazzacorati soon perceived that some singular faculties were developed in the patient during this state, and, in concert with M. Carini, he tried a series of expe-

riments, the marvellous results of which were the following.

*Phenomena of Condition.*—The patient heard no sound, however loud, which reached her by the ears; but if she was spoken to, even in the lowest whisper, directed on the hollow of the hand, or sole of the foot,—on the pit of the stomach, or along the traject of the sympathetic nerve, she heard perfectly the words addressed to her. It was the same, if, while speaking to her in a whisper, the speaker applied her hand to any of the places above mentioned. But, stranger still, she heard also when the person addressing her was only in distant mediate communication with the surface of the body. Amid a crowd of experiments, which leave no doubt of this fact, it will suffice to mention one in which the chain was of four persons, three of whom held each others' hands, and the fourth communicated with the third by the interposition of a very long wax-taper; the first of the chain, mean while, being the only person in contact with the patient. Under these circumstances, she heard perfectly the whispers of the fourth person pronounced at a considerable distance.

*Phenomena of Speech.*—The patient when left, to herself, kept constant silence; but, when interrogated in the manner above mentioned, she answered with perfect propriety, always making use of the

tone of voice of her questioner. If, during her answer, the immediate contact was broken, or the chain interrupted, she stopped suddenly, but the instant the communication was re-established, she finished her discourse, with this remarkable circumstance, that she took it up at the point where it would have arrived, had there been no interruption. It seems, then, that the answer was combined in her mind even while the external connexions were suspended, and that, during this suspension, the vocal organs became paralyzed.

*Phenomena of Natural or Magnetic vision.*—With her eyes closed, or even bandaged, she recognised things, *and their colours*, when placed on the regions where this special sensibility existed. She pointed out to the instant the hours and minutes on every watch. She often, but not always, succeeded in reading words written on paper. Later in the disease, this faculty became still more prodigiously developed. It sufficed to call her attention to any object placed in her room, *or in the next room, or in the street, or out of the town, or even at enormous distances*, to have it described by her as perfectly as if she saw it with her eyes. The following are some experiments sufficient to prove this assertion.—In presence of a celebrated professor of the University, it was agreed to ask her to describe a convent in the town, into which neither herself nor any of her

interrogators had ever entered. Next, to describe a cellar in a country house, equally unknown to the questioners. According to the descriptions she gave, plans were designed, and on the places being visited, they were found to correspond perfectly with the designs made by her dictation. She even pointed out the number and position of some barrels in the cellar. In the same sitting, the Professor questioned her respecting the arrangement of his study. Her answers were of the most perfect exactitude. The following questions and answers, for example, are extracted from the notes taken on the occasion :—"What is in such a corner?" "A table."—"And on the table?" "A book."—"And on the book?" "A skull."—"Of what?" "Of an animal."—"Of what animal?" "I don't know its name; but if you pronounce it among many others, I can tell you." In fact, on mentioning the names of many animals, she allowed several to pass, and instantly stopped at the panther, to which animal the skull actually belonged. It is remarkable, with respect to names of things and persons unknown to her, that she always pursued the same method, and thus obtained an almost intuitive knowledge thereof.

*She described also, with the same facility, the healthy and diseased parts of her own person, and of other individuals. The Professor already mentioned*



*subjected her to an anatomical examination, sometimes in Latin (a language of which she was perfectly ignorant) and sometimes in Italian, but always using scientific nomenclature. He obtained in reply most exact descriptions, in Italian, of the heart and its appendages, the solar plexus, the pancreas, the first vertebra or atlas, the mastoid apophysis, &c. She also gave precise notions respecting the pathological state of a lady she did not know. After this, the reader will scarcely be astonished when we add, that she described, with equal facility, places pointed out to her in Rome, Paris, and Naples.*

During the period in which her eyes remained open, and her pupils motionless and turned towards the light, the experimentalists believed that they observed that the optic axis had become electrometer of prodigious sensibility, since they turned constantly and immediately to the side where the smallest friction was exercised capable of producing electric tension. They thus perceived electric operations performing in an adjacent room. Finally, they followed, like a magnetic needle, the movements of a magnetic bar behind the patient's head, or even at the other side of a wall.

*Phenomena of Smell and Taste.*—Odorous substances were discovered by the patient with the same promptitude and precision. At the moment they were placed on the sensitive regions, she

named them, or, if she had no previous knowledge of the name of the substance applied, she recognised the name among many others pronounced before her. The touch presented analogous qualities. When a substance was placed on a sensitive region, she recognised it as perfectly as could be done by the most delicate hands.

The *Intellect*, sufficiently acute in its natural state, was much more so during the cataleptic access. Although she was acquainted only with the four rules of arithmetic, she succeeded, under the cataleptic influence, in extracting several roots of numbers; amongst others, that of the number 4965. However, this experiment was not invariably successful. She exposed with much lucidity several philosophical systems, and discussed others proposed to her. *She discovered and described the phases of her own disease.* At present, the patient is perfectly cured, having had recourse to no remedy whatever; but the cataleptic access can be now voluntarily reproduced and terminated. She has pointed out means by which analogous phenomena may be occasioned in other persons. The observers propose to make known all these discoveries in a work they are preparing on the subject.\*

This is unquestionably a very extraordinary, although by no means a singular case. My readers

\* I am not aware whether any such work has yet appeared.

may compare it with the numerous experiments made by Dr Petetin at Lyons, as detailed in the Appendix, with the case reported by Dr Joseph Frank, and with several others, in which the affection appears to have been developed in its highest degrees. Deception in these instances is totally out of the question, and there can be no doubt as to the competency of the observers.

I am happy to observe, that some of our own most respectable medical practitioners are now beginning to pay some degree of attention to the interesting phenomena of catalepsy and somnambulism, which hitherto they had, in general, either totally disregarded, or been accustomed to treat with contemptuous scepticism, as pretended miracles and impostures. In a recent clinical lecture on a case of catalepsy, which occurred in the Jervis Street Hospital, Dublin, by Mr Ellis, and published in the LANCET (Saturday, May 2. 1835), the ingenious lecturer, after describing the usual symptoms of the cataleptic affection, and alluding to the Bologna case, already reported, observes, that "this and similar statements are doubtless well calculated to put our credulity to the test; but when we call to mind the extraordinary phenomena which occur in cases of somnambulism, and what we have ourselves witnessed in the case of Mrs Finn, we are not, in my opinion, justified

in withholding our belief of the possibility of facts so well authenticated. Mr Ellis considers that Ecstasy (or Somnambulism) " bears a strong resemblance to Catalepsy." If the opinion of an unprofessional man who has paid much attention to this subject might be thought of any weight, I should be disposed to say, that somnambulism is sometimes simple, and sometimes the concomitant of some other morbid affection or functional derangement; while catalepsy occasionally presents a mixed or composite character, being accompanied with a more or less perfect somnambulism, and that it is in this last description of cases, in general, that the most remarkable phenomena are developed.

" When we come," says Mr Ellis, " to inquire into the causes of these strange diseases, we find that some of them arise spontaneously, and consequently, their origin will not admit of explanation. Others appear to be the result of functional derangement, or mental emotion; a third may be the effect of sympathetic imitation; whilst a fourth, it is alleged, may be produced by the mysterious agency of Animal Magnetism. The records of medicine furnish abundant examples of the two first. I will not, therefore, occupy your time in enumerating facts which are well known," &c. " but at once proceed

to direct your attention to a few cases, in order to prove the influence of sympathetic imitation, and of Animal Magnetism, in causing these diseases."

Mr Ellis then refers to the Bologna case, published in the *Gazette Medicale* of Paris, for November 1832, and which will be found, along with a variety of others, in the Appendix to this work (No. II.), and also to that of Mrs Finn, who became decidedly hysterical, in consequence of constantly sitting with an hysterical girl. Mr Ellis proceeds: "The advocates of Animal Magnetism allege that they can, by the exercise of certain manœuvres of the hand, conducted according to their system, produce ecstasy in such persons as may be subjected to its influence. Many cases in support of the truth of their doctrine have been published;" and the lecturer then refers to the case reported by M. Fillazzi in his inaugural thesis, which I shall give at length in a subsequent part of this work, when I come to canvass the opinions of M. Andral. Upon that most remarkable and most decisive case, Mr Ellis makes the following truly philosophical commentary. "However incredible or surprising this narrative may appear at the first blush, yet, when we bear in mind that it has been authenticated by a physician of character, who had been himself an unbeliever in the doctrines of Animal Magnetism, we should not, in my opinion, be

justified in doubting his veracity. Our knowledge of the laws of the animal economy is not yet sufficiently perfect to warrant our disbelief in the possibility of certain phenomena, *merely* on the grounds that we did not ourselves witness their occurrence, or because they cannot be satisfactorily explained according to our present notions of physiology and pathology. For my own part, I have made it a rule to receive all information on these abstruse but very interesting subjects, with feelings of impartiality, being uninfluenced by preconceived theories, and, I trust, not being hypercritically sceptical of the statements of others, and to wait patiently in all matters of doubt, with the hope that time, the growing intelligence of the age, and the advancement of science, will speedily dispel the obscurity."

Mr Ellis then proceeds to report the case of Mrs Finn, who was treated in the Jervis Street Hospital. It was a case of catalepsy, and presented many of the phenomena which we have seen occurring in other instances—such as insensibility to external *stimuli*, the transference of sensation, &c. "An Æolian was played close to her ear, but she seemed to be unconscious of what was doing; her head was then placed over a bucket, and some cold water was dashed upon her. She screamed violently, but did not become conscious. *She was*

*spoken to on the epigastrium, the palms of the hands, and the soles of the feet.* When she recovered from the fit, on being questioned as to whether she had heard the music, or any person speaking, or if she felt the water, she answered by *signs* in the negative." For a considerable period, she was deprived of the faculty of speech, but recovered it after vomiting. At a subsequent period, when her complaint appears to have become much modified, "she stated, that having been thinking over various matters which had occurred to her during the last two months, she recollected having heard a voice one day on the pit of the stomach while she was in a fit, and consequently otherwise insensible. On the occurrence of the first cataleptic attack after this communication, she was spoken to on the epigastrium as previously; and on the subsidence of the fit, she could repeat with accuracy every word addressed to her through this region. This experiment was often repeated, and always attended with similar results. She could hear the lowest whisper, or even the ticking of a watch. However, she was incapable of distinguishing between the voices of different persons who spoke to her. She stated, that the voice appeared to her as if it issued from a barrel, and that she could form no idea whatever of the state she was in."

It were exceedingly desirable that we possessed many such intelligent and philosophical practitioners as Mr Ellis;—men who would not disdain to interrogate Nature, and to listen to reason, instead of having their opinions constantly regulated, and their views cramped, by an obstinate adherence to preconceived notions.



## CHAPTER XIX.

I SHALL adduce only one other instance of the natural somnambulism. The case is one of recent occurrence. It is so exceedingly interesting in itself, illustrates so many of the characteristic phenomena of the affection under discussion, and was so carefully observed by a competent and skilful physician, that I am induced to enter much more fully into its details, than I have done in the preceding instances. The following account is extracted from a long and minute report by Dr Belden, the medical attendant upon the patient, in the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, No. 28, for August 1834.

Jane C. Rider, in the seventeenth year of her age, subject to frequent headaches, was first attacked with the singular affection about to be described, on the night of the 24th of June. Dr Belden, who was called in, found her struggling to get out of bed, and complaining much of pain in the left side of her head. Her face was flushed, head hot, eyes closed, and her pulse much excited.

Attributing the attack to the presence of undigested food in the stomach, Dr Belden gave her an active purgative, which brought away a large quantity of green currants, after which she became more quiet, and soon fell into a natural sleep, from which she did not awake until morning; *when she was totally unconscious of every thing that had passed during the night, and could scarcely be persuaded that she had not slept quietly the whole time.* After the lapse of nearly a month, she was attacked with a second paroxysm, during which, after several attempts to keep her in bed, it was determined to suffer her to take her own course, and watch her movements. Released from constraint, she dressed herself, went down stairs, and proceeded to make preparations for breakfast.

She set the table, arranged the various articles with the utmost precision, went into a dark room, and to a closet at the most remote corner of it, from which she took the coffee cups, placed them on a waiter, turned it sideways to pass through the doors, avoided all intervening obstacles, and deposited the whole safely on the table. She then went into the pantry, the blinds of which were shut, and the door closed after her. She there skimmed the milk, poured the cream into one cup, and the milk into another, without spilling a drop.

She then cut the bread, placed it regularly on the plate, and divided the slices in the middle. In fine, she went through the whole operation of preparing breakfast, with as much precision as she could in open day; *and this with her eyes closed*, and without any light except that of one lamp, which was standing in the room, to enable the family to observe her operations. During the whole time, she seemed to take no notice of those around her, unless they purposely stood in her way, or placed chairs or other obstacles before her, when she avoided them, with an expression of impatience at being thus disturbed. She finally returned voluntarily to bed, *and on finding the table arranged for breakfast when she made her appearance in the morning, inquired why she had been suffered to sleep, while another had performed her duty. None of the transactions of the preceding night had left the slightest impression on her mind.*

After this, the paroxysms became more frequent. Sometimes she did not leave her room, but was occupied in looking over the contents of her trunk, and arranging the different articles of dress. *She occasionally placed things where she could not find them when awake, but some circumstances induced the belief that the knowledge of their situation was restored in a subsequent paroxysm.* In one instance, she disposed of her needle-book where she could

not afterwards discover it; but after some time had elapsed, she was found one night in her chamber, sewing a ring on the curtain with a needle which she must have procured from the lost book.

The entire paroxysm was sometimes passed in bed, where she sung, talked, and repeated passages of poetry. Once she imagined herself at Brattleborough, spoke of scenes and persons with which she was acquainted there, and described the characters of certain individuals with great accuracy and shrewdness, and imitated their actions so exactly as to produce a most comical effect.

Generally, her conceptions relative to place were, to a certain extent, correct—those relating to time were very commonly inaccurate. *She almost invariably supposed it was day*: hence her common reply, when reminded it was time for her to retire, was —“What! go to bed in the day-time?”—*Still her movements were always regulated by the senses, and not by her preconceived notions of things.* Her chamber was contiguous to a hall, at one extremity of which was the stair-case. At the head of the stair was a door, which was usually left open, but which was once closed after she was asleep, and fastened by placing the blade of a knife over the latch. *On getting up, she rushed impetuously from her room, and, without stopping, reached out her hand before*

*she came to the door, seized the knife, and throwing it indignantly on the floor, exclaimed, "Why do you wish to fasten me in?"*

Allusion has been made to her sewing in the dark, and circumstances render it almost certain that she must at that time have threaded her needle also. Some time after this occurrence, she conceived the plan, during a paroxysm, of making a bag, in which, as she said, to boil some squash. *She was then seen to thread a needle in a room in which there was barely light enough to enable others to perceive what she was about; and afterwards, the same night, she was seen to do it with her eyes closed. In this condition, she completed the bag, and, though a little puckered, as she observed, it still answered very well to boil the squash in. In one instance, she not only arranged the table for a meal, but actually prepared a dinner in the night, with her eyes closed. She first went into the cellar in the dark, procured the vegetables, washed each kind separately, brought in the wood and made a fire. While they were being boiled, she completed the arrangements of the table, and then proceeded to try the vegetables, to ascertain whether they were sufficiently cooked. After repeated trials, she observed the smallest of them were done—she took them up, and, after waiting a little, said the rest would do, and took them up also. They were actually*

very well cooked. She then remarked that S., a little girl in the family, ate milk, and procured a bowl for her—she also procured one for herself, and ate it. As the family did not set themselves at table, she became impatient, and complained that the men never were ready for their dinner. *While engaged in her preparations, she observed a lamp burning in the room, and extinguished it, saying, she did not know why people wished to keep a lamp burning in the day-time.* On being requested to go to bed, she objected, alleging that it was day. *In the morning, she appeared as usual, totally unconscious of the transactions of the preceding night.*

At the commencement of a paroxysm, she appeared to a spectator like a person going quietly to sleep. *Her eyes were closed, the respirations became long and deep, her attitude, and the motions of the head, resembled those of a person in a profound slumber.* Her manner differed exceedingly in different paroxysms. Sometimes she engaged in her usual occupations, and then her motions were remarkably quick and impetuous—*she moved with astonishing rapidity, and accomplished whatever she attempted with a celerity of which she was utterly incapable in her natural state.* She frequently sat in a rocking chair, at times nodding, and then moving her head from side to side, with a kind of nervous uneasiness, the hand and fingers being, at the same

time, affected with a sort of involuntary motion. In the intervals of reading and talking, and even when engaged in these very acts, her nods, the expressions of her countenance, and her apparent insensibility to surrounding objects, forced upon the mind the conviction that she was asleep. Pain in a circumscribed spot on the left side of the head was generally, if not always, an attendant on the paroxysm, and frequently occasioned a degree of suffering almost beyond endurance. To this spot she invariably pointed as the seat of her agony, when she repeated the expression, "It ought to be cut open—it ought to be cut open."\*

*Her eyes were generally closed, but at times they were widely open, and the pupil was then very considerably dilated. These different states of the eye seemed to occasion no difference in the power of seeing—she saw apparently as well when they were closed as she did when they were open.†*

\* Without intending to cast the slightest imputation upon the respectable medical attendant on this young lady, and at the risk of exposing myself, perhaps, to the ridicule of the whole profession, I have no hesitation in saying that, in my humble opinion, the wish of the patient ought to have been complied with, and an operation, if possible, performed. It is one of the many extraordinary circumstances attending somnambulism, that no medicine nor mode of treatment prescribed by a patient, in that state, has ever been known to operate injuriously; on the contrary, it generally does good; while the neglect of such prescriptions frequently produces bad consequences.

† In my original abstract of this case, I omitted a passage in

*There is abundant evidence that she recollected, during a paroxysm, circumstances which occurred in a former attack, though there was no remembrance of them in the interval.* A single illustration will suffice, though many more might be given. In a paroxysm, a lady who was present placed in her hand a bead-bag which she had never seen before. She

Dr Belden's Report which here follows, because it appeared to me to describe a solitary phenomenon, probably depending upon some peculiarity in this patient, from which no general conclusion could be legitimately deduced. I have since learnt, however, that the matter has been viewed by others in a different light; and I, therefore, insert the passage here, lest I should be thought to have suppressed any circumstance material to the explanation of the case.

In order to test the sensibility of the eye, the reporter took one evening a small concave mirror, and held it so that the rays proceeding from a lamp were reflected upon her closed eye-lid. When the light was so diffused that the outline of the illuminated space could scarcely be distinguished, it caused, the moment it fell on the eye-lid, a shock equal to that produced by an electric battery, followed by the exclamation: "Why do you wish to shoot me in the eyes?" This experiment was repeated several times, and was always attended with the same result. It was also tried when she was awake, and the effect, though less striking, was very perceptible. The same degree of light thrown on the reporter's eye-lids occasioned no pain.

Understanding that attempts had been made to construct some theory upon the above-mentioned facts, I think it right to put my readers in possession of the following observation of Professor Kluge:

"Most frequently the magnetic treatment produces an excited sensibility in the optic nerve, and a sensation of burning in the eyes, accompanied with flashes of light, or a convulsive twitching of the eye-lids."—KLUGE, p. 353.



examined it, named the colours, and compared them with those of a bag belonging to a lady in the family. The latter bag being presented to her in a subsequent paroxysm, the recollection of the former was restored—she told the colours of the beads, and made the same remarks respecting the comparative value of the two bags that she had done before. The reporter had taken measures to satisfy himself in the interval that she then remembered nothing of the first impression.

At the termination of a paroxysm, she sunk into a profound sleep. The frown disappeared from her brow, the respirations again became long and deep, and the attitude was that of a person in undisturbed slumber. She soon began to gape and rub her eyes, and these motions were repeated after short intervals of repose. In the course of fifteen or twenty minutes from the first appearance of these symptoms, she opened her eyes, when recollection was at once restored. *She then invariably reverted to the time and place at which the attack commenced, and in no instance, when under the care of the reporter, manifested any knowledge of the time that had elapsed, or the circumstances which transpired during the interval.*

The family in which Jane lived were early convinced, from the confidence with which she moved about, and the facility with which she always

avoided obstacles, that she saw both when her eyes were closed and in the dark; but no experiments were instituted to determine the fact until the evening of the 10th of November, when it was proposed to ascertain *whether she could read with her eyes closed.*

*She was seated in a corner of the room, the lights were placed at a distance from her, and so screened as to leave her in almost entire darkness. In this situation, she read with ease a great number of cards which were presented to her, some of which were written with a pencil, and so obscurely, that in a faint light no trace could be discerned by common eyes. She told the reporter the date of coins, even when the figures were nearly obliterated. A visitor handed her a letter, with the request that she would read the motto on the seal, which she readily did, although several persons present had been unable to decypher it with the aid of a lamp. The whole of this time her eyes were, to all appearance, firmly closed.*

Upon one occasion, she fell asleep while her physician (the reporter) was prescribing for her, and her case having now excited considerable interest, she was visited during that and the following day, by probably more than a hundred people. Upon this occasion she did not awake until forty-eight hours after the attack. *During this time, she read a great variety of cards written and presented to her*

*by different individuals, told the time by watches, and wrote short sentences.*

For greater security, a second handkerchief was sometimes placed below the one which she wore constantly over her eyes, but apparently without causing any obstruction to the vision. She also repeated, with great propriety and distinctness, several pieces of poetry, some of which she had learned in childhood, but had forgotten, and others which she had merely read several times since, without having ever committed them to memory. In addition to this, she sung several songs, such as "Auld Lang Syne," and "Bruce's Address to his army," with propriety and correctness. Yet she never learned to sing, and never had been known to sing a tune when awake.

*On the 20th of November, the reporter took a large black silk handkerchief, placed between the folds two pieces of cotton batting, and applied it in such a way that the cotton came directly over the eyes, and completely filled the cavity on each side of the nose—the silk was distinctly seen to be in close contact with the skin. Various names were then written on cards, both of persons with whom she was acquainted, and of those who were unknown to her, which she read as soon as they were presented to her. This was done by most of the persons in the room. In reading, she always held the paper the right side up, and*

brought it into the line of vision. The cards were generally placed in her hand, for the purpose of attracting her notice; but when her attention was excited, she read equally well that which was held before her by another.

Being desirous, if possible, to prove that the eye was actually closed, the reporter took two large wads of cotton, and placed them directly on the closed eye-lids, and then bound them on with the handkerchief before used. The cotton filled the cavity under the eye-brow, came down to the middle of the cheek, and was in close contact with the nose. The former experiments were then repeated, without any difference in the result. She also took a pencil, and while rocking in her chair, wrote her own name, each word separately, and dotted the *i*. Her father, who was present, asked her to write his name. "Shall I write Little Billy or Stiff Billy?" was her reply, imagining that the question was proposed by a little boy of the name of William, belonging to the family. She wrote *Stiff Billy*—the two words without connexion, and after writing them both, she went back and dotted the *i* in each. She then wrote *Springfield* under them, and after observing it a moment, smilingly remarked that she had left out a letter, and inserted the *l* in the proper place. At another time, a

gentleman present wrote his name in characters so small that no one else could distinguish it at the usual distance from the eye. As soon as the paper was put into her hand, she pronounced the name. *Although she was closely watched, no attempt to open the eyes was observed.*

During almost every paroxysm, she repeated poetry and sung, and though there are some pieces which she must have repeated in this way scores of times, her knowledge of them when she is awake is not in the least improved by the practice. These experiments were performed in the presence of several of the most respectable and intelligent gentlemen in town, and they were all convinced there could be no deception.

While in a paroxysm, the lights were removed from her room, and the windows so secured that no object was discernible. Two books were then presented to her, which had been selected for the purpose; she immediately told the titles of both, though one of them was a book she had never seen before.

The room in the front part of the house she had never seen, except for a few moments several months before. The shutters were closed, and it was so dark that it was impossible for any one possessing only ordinary powers of vision to distinguish the colours on the carpet. She, however,

though her eyes were bandaged, noticed and commented upon the various articles of furniture, and pointed out the different colours in the hearth-rug. She also took up and read several cards which were lying on the table. Soon after, observing her with a skein of thread in her hand, Dr Belden offered to hold it for her to wind. She immediately placed it on his hands, and took hold of the end of the thread, in a manner which satisfied him that she saw it, and completed the operation as skilfully and readily as if she were awake. Having left the room a moment, the Doctor found her, on his return, with her needle threaded, and hemming a cambric handkerchief. Bryant's Poems were given to her; she opened the book, and turning to the *Thanatopsis*, read the whole (three pages), and the most of it with great propriety.

At dinner, she took her seat at the table, helped herself to bread when it was offered, presented her tumbler for water, and, throughout the whole time, did not, by her manner or actions, betray the least want of sight.

With a black silk handkerchief stuffed with cotton bound over her eyes, she wrote a part of the *Snow Storm*, one of the pieces she was in the habit of repeating when asleep. A person standing behind her very carefully interposed a piece of brown paper between her eyes and the paper on which she

was writing. Whenever this was done, she appeared disturbed, and exclaimed—"Don't, don't." During a paroxysm, she went into a dark room, and selected from among several letters, having different directions, the one bearing the name she was requested to find. She was heard to take up one letter after another, and examine it, till she came to the one for which she was in search, when she exclaimed, "Here it is," and brought it out. She also, with her eyes bandaged, wrote of her own accord two stanzas of poetry on a slate; the lines were straight and parallel.

She occasionally exhibited an extraordinary power of imitation. This extended not only to the manner, but to the language and sentiments of the persons whom she personified: and her performances in this way were so striking, and her conceptions of character so just, that nothing could be more comical. *This, like her other extraordinary powers, was confined to her somnambulist state—at other times, she did not exhibit the slightest trace of it.*

Like other somnambulists, she appeared fatigued, and her morbid symptoms were manifestly aggravated, by the constant trials of her powers.

In one of her paroxysms, she lost a book, which she could not afterwards find. Next day, immediately on the access of the paroxysm, she went to

the sofa, raised the cushion, took up the book, and commenced reading. Her eyes were covered with a white handkerchief, folded so as to make eight or ten thicknesses, and the spaces below the bandage filled with stripes of black velvet. She then took a book and read audibly, distinctly, and correctly, nearly a page. It was then proposed to her to play backgammon. She said she knew nothing of the game, but consented to learn it. She commenced playing, with the assistance of one acquainted with the moves, and acquired a knowledge of the game very rapidly. She handled the men and dice with facility, and counted off the points correctly. She had another paroxysm in the afternoon, in which she played a number of games of backgammon, and made such proficiency, that, without any assistance, she won the sixth game of Dr Butler, who is an experienced player. Knowing her to be a novice, he suggested several alterations in her moves—these alterations she declined making, and the result shewed the correctness of her judgment. The Doctor, a little mortified at being beaten by a sleeping girl, tried another game, in which she exerted all his skill. At its close, she had but three men left on the board, and these so situated that a single move would have cleared the whole. While she was engaged in this game, an apple was taken from a dish, in which there were several varieties,



and held before her, but higher than her eyes. On being asked its colour, she raised her head, like a person who wished to see an object a little elevated, and gave a correct answer to the question. In the lucid interval, half an hour after she awoke from the paroxysm, it was proposed to her to play backgammon. She observed she never saw it played, and was wholly ignorant of the game. On trial, it was found that she could not even set the men.

At another time, she opened her eyes, and declared that she could not see when they were shut. When reading, the Doctor placed his fingers on her eyes—she said immediately it was total darkness, and she could not read a word. At dinner, her eyes were open, and all the family supposed her awake; but she declared in the evening that she had not the least recollection of dining, of seeing some friends, or of witnessing a catastrophe in the gallery which disturbed the whole family, and in which she was much interested at the time. Soon after this, the Doctor observes that she evidently had lost her former acuteness of sight; from which circumstance it would appear that her somnambulism had gradually become less perfect; and this view is corroborated by a subsequent statement, that “lately her face had been less flushed, and her head less painful.”

In one of her paroxysms, she wrote a long and sensible letter to her aunt, describing her own situation. She afterwards remembered that she had written a letter, but could not recollect its contents.

The above is an abstract of the history of this very remarkable case—a case so minutely observed, and so ably reported—a case in which, the intelligent Reporter assures us, all idea of imposition or deception is precluded. I have purposely omitted all those particulars which could be interesting only to the medical student, and also many insulated circumstances and phenomena which appeared to me to be unimportant. I do not intend to enter into any investigation of the theory upon which the Reporter attempts to account for some of the phenomena, viz. an excited state of certain portions of the brain. It has hitherto been too much the practice, in treating of this subject, to build up a theory upon some one solitary fact, or, at least, upon the circumstances of some single case; whereas, it appears to me to be much more philosophical, and much more satisfactory in the end, first to form a sufficient collection of well-authenticated cases to constitute a legitimate basis of induction; and then to proceed to classify the phenomena which may be found to have been manifested in the whole, or in the greater number of instances.

. In the preceding case, we meet with the following phenomena: organic insensibility—vision without the exercise of the usual organ—a great exaltation of the intellectual faculties, and an entire oblivion, when awake, of every thing that occurred during the paroxysm. The phenomenon of the *double personality* also appears pretty distinctly developed. To this I formerly alluded, and other instances of it will occur when I come to treat of the Magnetic Somnambulism.

## CHAPTER XX.

WITH the preceding case I had originally intended to conclude my examples of the natural somnambulism, conceiving that, with the magnetic cases to be afterwards adduced, I should have laid a sufficient foundation for a generalization of the phenomena. I have been induced to alter this intention, however, for reasons which, I think, will immediately become apparent; and I am otherwise not displeased to have an opportunity of bringing under the notice of my readers an example of one peculiar species of that remarkable generic affection which has engaged our attention in the foregoing pages—the *devotional ecstasis*.

The following curious case is extracted from a review of M. Auguste de St Hilaire's *Travels in the Diamond District of Brazil*, in the 42d Number of the *Westminster Review*, October 1834. The Reviewer, like many other persons who write or speak in total ignorance of the subject, compares this case with what he is pleased to denominate

“the *speciosa miracula* operated by Animal Magnetism in France,” which, he confidently assures us, are “susceptible of an easy explanation; *having been in fact nothing more than a voluptuous jugglery, set on foot and carried on for very intelligible purposes.*”

This is really a very beautiful specimen of the *slap-dash* style of criticism, so common amongst our review-writers, and so utterly ludicrous to every man of intelligence and candour. The Reviewer seems to be profoundly ignorant that the phenomena—the *speciosa miracula*\*—to which he alludes, have occurred, in thousands of instances, not only in France, but in Great Britain, in Germany, in Switzerland, in Italy, in Holland, in Russia, in Denmark, in Sweden, in India, in America—in all parts of Europe—in all quarters of the globe; that no *voluptuous jugglery* is attempted in the magnetic processes, and that the purpose in view is merely to heal the sick. But the critic evidently did not know what Animal Magnetism is, and wanting the ingenuous modesty which would have led him either to acknowledge his ignorance, or be silent on the subject, and probably

\* It must never be forgotten that it is the unintelligent opponents and not the intelligent advocates of Animal Magnetism, who designate these phenomena as miracles. The magnetists consider them as natural occurrences, and endeavour to discover their causes.

unwilling to let slip so fair an opportunity of saying something vastly smart, he utters an oracle of flippant nonsense.

The following is the case referred to :—

On the Serra de Piedade, says the traveller, I saw a woman of whom I had heard much in the *Comarcas* of Sabará and Villa Rica. Sister Germaine, the woman in question, was attacked about 1808 by an hysterical affection, accompanied by violent convulsions. She was at first exorcised—remedies mal-adapted to her complaint were made use of—and her condition degenerated from bad to worse. At length, at the period of my visit, she had for a long time been reduced to so extreme a state of weakness, that she was no longer able to rise from her bed, and subsisted upon a regimen which could scarcely have supported the life of a new-born infant. Animal food, rich soups and gravies, her stomach was no longer in a condition to receive. Sweetmeats, cheese, a little bread or flour, constituted the whole of her food;—frequently she was unable to retain what she had taken;—and it was almost always necessary to use considerable persuasion to decide her to eat at all.

It was on all hands admitted, that the manners of Germaine had always been pure, her conduct irreproachable. During the progress of her disor-

der, her devotion had daily assumed a more enthusiastic character. Fridays and Saturdays she fasted entirely; at first, indeed, her mother opposed this practice; but when Germaine declared that, during these two days, it was utterly impossible for her to take any nourishment, she was allowed to have her own way, and accordingly, submitted, on those occasions, to total abstinence. In order to indulge her devotion for the Virgin, she caused herself to be transported to the Serra de Piedade, where there is a chapel erected under the auspices of Our Lady of Pity, and she obtained from her spiritual director permission to remain in this asylum. In this retreat, meditating one day on the mystery of the Passion, she fell into a kind of ecstasy: her arms grew stiff, and were extended in the form of a cross; her feet were disposed in the same attitude; and in this position she remained during forty-eight hours. This was four years ago; and ever afterwards the phenomenon was weekly repeated. She relapsed into her ecstatic attitude on Thursday or Friday night, and continued in a sort of trance until Saturday evening or Sunday, without receiving the slightest nourishment, without speech or movement.

The rumour of this phenomenon quickly spread through the neighbourhood; thousands of persons of all ranks crowded to behold it; it was declared

to be a miracle; Sister Germaine was regarded as a saint; and two surgeons of the province communicated an additional impulse to the veneration of the people, by declaring, in a written document, that her situation was supernatural. This declaration remained in manuscript, but was widely circulated, and numerous copies of it were taken. Dr Gomide, an able physician educated at Edinburgh, thought it necessary to refute the declaration of the two surgeons, and, in 1814, published at Rio de Janeiro (but without his name), a small pamphlet, replete with science and logic, in which he proves, by a multitude of authorities, that the ecstasies of Germaine were merely the effects of catalepsy.

The public was now divided in opinion; but crowds of people still continued to ascend the Serra, to admire the prodigy operated there. Nevertheless Father Cypriano da Santissima Trindade, the late Bishop of Marianna, a prudent, enlightened man, sensible of the inconveniences which might arise from the numerous assemblies collected by Sister Germaine upon the mountain, and desirous of discrediting the pretended miracle, from which there resulted at least as much scandal as edification, prohibited the celebration of mass at La Piedade, under pretence that permission had never been obtained from the king. Many per-



sons offered Germaine an asylum in their houses : but she gave the preference to her confessor, a grave middle-aged man, who resided in the vicinity of the mountain. The devotees were greatly afflicted at the prohibition of the Bishop of Marianna, but they did not sleep: they solicited from the king himself permission to celebrate mass in the Chapel of the Serra, and it was granted them. Germaine was now transported a second time to the summit of the mountain: her confessor occasionally ascended thither for the celebration of mass; and the concourse of pilgrims and curious persons was weekly renewed.

A short time previous to my visit, continues M. de St Hilaire, a new prodigy began to manifest itself. Every Tuesday she experienced an ecstasy of several hours; her arms quitted their natural position, and assumed the figure of a cross behind her back. In the course of my conversation with her confessor, he told me that, for some time, he was unable to explain this phenomenon, until he at length recollected that on this day it was customary to propose to the meditation of the faithful the suffering of Christ bound. The disinterestedness and charity of this priest had been described to me in glowing colours. I had a long conversation with him, and found him a person not altogether destitute of education. He spoke

of his penitent without enthusiasm ; professed to desire that enlightened men should study her condition ; and almost the only reproach he uttered against Dr Gomide was, that he had written his book without having seen the holy woman. *If what this priest related to me of the ascendancy he possessed over Germaine be not exaggerated, the partizans of Animal Magnetism would probably derive from it strong arguments in support of their system. He in fact assured me, that, in the midst of the most fearful convulsions, it was always sufficient for him to touch the patient to restore her to perfect tranquillity. During her periodical ecstasies, when her limbs were so stiff that it would have been easier to break than bend them, her confessor, according to his own account, had only to touch her arm, in order to give it whatever position he thought proper.* However this may be, it is certain that, having commanded her to receive the sacrament, during one of these ecstatic trances, she rose with a convulsive movement from the bed on which she had been carried to the church, and kneeling down, with her arms crossed, received the consecrated wafer ; since which time she has always communicated during her ecstasies. At the same time, her confessor spoke with extreme simplicity of his empire over the pretended Saint ; attributed it wholly to her docility and veneration for the sacerdotal character ; and

added, that any other priest would have been able to produce the same effects. With all that confidence which the magnetizers require in their adepts, he observed, that so complete is the obedience of the poor girl, that should I command her to abstain from food during a whole week, she would not hesitate to comply. He was also persuaded that she would have suffered no inconvenience from the experiment, but added, "I fear I should be tempting God by making it."

"I requested permission," continues the traveller, "to see Germaine, and was conducted into the small chamber where she constantly reclined. Her countenance was visible, though partly overshadowed by a large handkerchief which projected over her forehead; she appeared to be about thirty-four years of age.....Her physiognomy was mild and agreeable, but indicative of extreme emaciation and debility. I inquired respecting her health, and she replied, in an exceedingly feeble voice, that it was much better than she deserved. I felt her pulse, and was surprised to find it very rapid. On the following Friday, I again visited Germaine. She was in bed, stretched upon her back, with her head enveloped in a handkerchief, and her arms extended in the form of a cross; one of them was prevented by the wall from occupying its proper position, the other projected beyond the bed-side,

and was supported by a stool. Her hand felt extremely cold, the thumb and forefinger were extended, but the other fingers were bent, the knees drawn up, and the feet placed over each other. In this position she was perfectly immoveable; and her pulse being scarcely perceptible, she might have been taken for a corpse, if the rise and fall of the bosom in the act of respiration had not indicated the presence of life. I sometimes attempted to bend her arms, but without success; the rigidity of the muscles increased in proportion to my efforts, which could not have been more violent without inconvenience to the patient. Certainly, I more than once closed her hands; but on releasing the fingers they resumed their former position."

Such is the case related by M. de St Hilaire, which has called forth the sneers of the Westminster reviewer. As I have already stated, it constitutes one instance, among many, of a specific variety of that organic affection which I have been attempting to illustrate under the generic designation of Natural Somnambulism. It presents a specimen of catalepsy combined with devotional ecstasy, of which many other instances might be adduced, were I not afraid of trespassing too much upon the time and patience of my readers.

The reviewer observes, in conclusion, that "from

the circumstances attending this transaction, some insight may be obtained into the character of the Brazilians, whose ignorance, credulity, and superstition exceed belief." Now, credulity and superstition, in one form or another, are, probably, pretty equally diffused over the globe;—witness the followers of Joanna Southcote,\* and the adepts in the unknown tongues, amongst ourselves; and the recent case of Robert Matthews, or Mathias, in America. But if in search of ignorance, the reviewer, assuredly, did not require to travel quite so far beyond the precincts of Westminster. If the pious Brazilians were mistaken in supposing that there was any thing miraculous in the case of Sister Germaine, the reviewer is still more unpardonably wrong in treating a natural occurrence with ridicule, and in describing Animal Magnetism as "a voluptuous jugglery." It is equally strange and lamentable, that any writer pretending to a compe-

\* I find from Dr Iung-Stillings's *Theory of Pneumatology*, that parallel cases to that of Joanna Southcote have occurred in Germany. "A common servant girl in the north of Germany received, while in a trance, the commission that she should bring forth the prince who should bear rule under Christ in his approaching kingdom. A married clergyman, and in other respects a pious man, let himself be deceived by her; he believed her, and she really bore a son; but my readers," says the author, "may judge whether he will become that to which his mother had destined him. A similar event took place, a few years ago, in the south of Germany."

tent knowledge of the literature and science of the age, should not be aware that the case above described constitutes one of a pretty numerous class, the phenomena of which have occasionally attracted the attention of physicians and philosophers. It is part of the business of Animal Magnetism to collect and classify these cases, and, if possible, by means of generalization and induction, to explain their peculiarities, to point out the natural principles upon which they depend, and thus deprive them of their miraculous character. In this interesting philosophical investigation, it is quite provoking to be met at every corner by the silly sneers of ignorance, imbecility, and an irrational incredulity.

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